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JULY 11, 2003

Equality shopping

Target leads on gay policies, despite Wal-Mart's efforts.

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Ruling expected in Mass. marriage case

Legalization in one state could open up marriage for all

Story, Page 17

Debbie Stokes (left) and **Cindy Williams**, from Georgia, show off their rings after their June wedding at Toronto City Hall. American gay and lesbian couples may soon be able to marry in the United States. A ruling by a Massachusetts court is expected soon that many experts predict will legalize same-sex marriage in that state. (Photo by Tony Bock/AP)

BAT ATTACK: Aaron Price seeks a new trial for his conviction in a campus beating. **Page 7**

WORD WISE: Emory scholar Mark Jordan discusses language of sex in church. **Page 45**

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local news

DP benefits vary among jurisdictions

Programs offered by four metro governments differ greatly in eligibility, costs

By JENNIFER J. SMITH

With a 4-2 vote on July 2, Fulton County became the fourth government in Georgia to offer health insurance and family leave benefits to domestic partners of its employees.

But the make-up of those four programs — and their utilization and cost — varies tremendously, according to government officials.

Fulton County's plan, which takes effect in January, "wasn't specifically intended to be any better or any worse than anyone else's, it was intended to offer long overdue equal benefits to deserving employees," said Commissioner Robb Pitts, co-sponsor of the legislation.

"It was drafted based on all of those programs with an eye on passing constitutional muster, but in that vein we did rely heavily on Atlanta's plan, because it's the only one to have seen a court challenge," he said.

The City of Atlanta was the first government in Georgia to offer domestic partner benefits. Initially passed by the City Council in 1993, it took an extended legal fight — including two trips to the Georgia Supreme Court — before the benefits took effect in January 2000.

Atlanta's plan encompasses both gay and unmarried heterosexual partners, according to Sue Ross, a city spokesperson.

No other municipal governments in metro Atlanta allow unmarried heterosexuals to access the benefits. Both the City of Decatur and DeKalb County passed their own versions of domestic partner benefits in 2001, according to spokespeople, and both — like Fulton — limited the policy to same-sex partners.

Fulton's policy is gay-specific "because those employees don't have the option of going out and getting married," said Commissioner Tom Lowe, a conservative Republican who provided a dramatic last minute amendment limiting Fulton's plan to gays only.

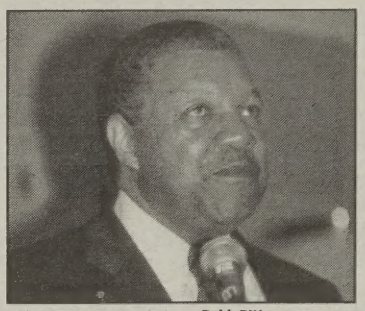
Decatur City Commissioner Kecia Cunningham, who is gay and supported the DP benefits plan there, echoed Lowe's motivation.

"Ours is gay only because that's the only way to level the playing field for employees who can't go out and get married," she said.

More than a week after the Fulton bill's passage, no individual or group has threatened to challenge the legislation, according to Pitts.

The Southeastern Legal Foundation, a conservative public interest law firm in Atlanta, led the fight against Atlanta's domestic partner benefits.

Officials with the organization did not respond to interview requests by press time.



Fulton County Commissioner **Robb Pitts**, co-sponsor of domestic partner benefits legislation approved July 2, said he looked to the benefits offered by the City of Atlanta as a model for the Fulton policy. Pitts previously served on the Atlanta City Council. (Photo by R.O. Youngblood)

Procedures, costs vary

All four metro governments that offer DP benefits require employees to certify they are in a "committed relationship." But how they document the relationships differ widely.

Fulton County and Atlanta created an official domestic partner registry, including notarized signatures. Yet for Decatur and DeKalb County, qualification can be as simple as providing examples of co-habitation such as mail in both partners' names that comes to the same address, and a joint mortgage, lease, or car title in both partners' names.

Because of the difference in who qualifies under the different plans, the number of participating employees also varies widely.

Atlanta, with the most inclusive policy, has 140 participating employees out of 6,700 total employees, according to Ross. The annual cost to the city in 2002 was $360,580.32, a 46 percent increase over the previous year, she said.

While Ross said she couldn't provide a breakdown between same-sex and opposite-sex partners using the benefits, about two-thirds of those participants are unmarried heterosexuals, according to Allen Thornell, executive director of Georgia Equality, a gay advocacy group that tracks and supports the policies.

Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin praised the city's plan.

"The domestic partners program has worked well for the City of Atlanta, which is why I was able to express that information to the Fulton County Board of Commissioners during their consideration of domestic partners legislation," Franklin told Southern Voice this week.

DeKalb County has had as many as 12 employees enrolled out of a total of approximately 7,000 employees, according to Thornell. The county has seven employees enrolled currently, said Jason Warner, a DeKalb spokesperson.

Roger Pickens, a DeKalb benefits specialist, estimated the county's total annual expense at $50,000.

DeKalb has "had no problems," with the benefits, Warner said.

Decatur, the smallest jurisdiction to offer DP benefits, has had just one out of 201 city employees enrolled since the benefits took effect, according to Peggy Merriss, city manager.

The city's annual cost from the program "probably did not exceed $3,000 or $4,000," said Bien Nguyen, Decatur's personnel administrator.

Decatur's experience has been "very positive overall," Merriss said.

Fulton County, the newest local government to offer the benefits, hasn't enacted the benefits yet, so exact costs remain unknown, according to Pitts.

During commission debate over the benefits , Fulton County Chief Financial Officer Patrick O'Connor said each domestic partner would cost the county the same as a spouse, an average of $3,600 each per year.

Fulton County has 6,800 employees. With a national enrollment average of two percent for domestic partner programs, that would equate to $180,000 to $360,000, O'Connor said.

Additional tax burden

Fulton County employees are still celebrating the passage of domestic partner benefits, but there are some down sides to the bill, according to James Anderson, a gay accountant in Atlanta.

"Because the IRS does not recognize gay marriage, which includes domestic partners as defined in these bills, those benefits are considered taxable perks," he said. "Which ups the tax burden for employees participating in the programs."

Most employees in Atlanta, Decatur, DeKalb and Fulton would fall into the 26 percent tax category, he said, meaning each employee could pay between several hundred and $2,000 in additional taxes each year.

Eric Erickson, a spokesperson for the Internal Revenue Service in Atlanta, confirmed that marital status would determine whether the benefits were taxable.

"They're not for married couples, but if a gay couple filed a joint return it would be rejected because the IRS does not recognize same-sex couples," said Erickson, who is gay.

Employer-provided coverage under a health plan for individuals other than the employee, the employee's legal spouse or dependents is included in the employee's gross income, according to IRS code section 106, Erickson said.

A dependent's health plan is not taxable. A same-sex partner may qualify as a dependent if more than 50 percent of that person's expenses are paid by the employee, Erickson said, but he urged taxpayers to seek professional advice before filing returns claiming a domestic partner as a dependent.

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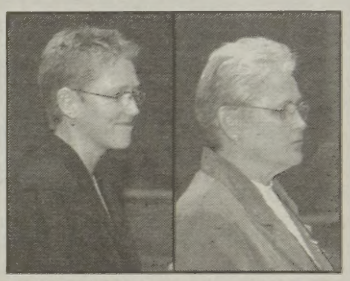
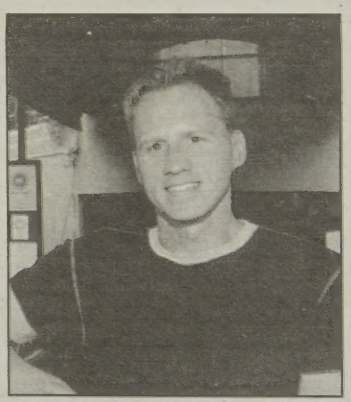


FULTON'S FACE: Fulton County employees **Jean Bean** (left) and **Mary Louise Upshaw** helped lobby for DP benefits as part of a new gay group. **Local Life**, Page 23



RUSH TO LOVE: Mark O'Reilley discovers that speed dating is a rush of disappointing encounters. **SoVo Living**, Page 33

correction

In the July 4 edition of Southern Voice, a news story about the Fulton County Commission ("Fulton approves DP benefits") misspells the name of Gary Cox, the deputy chief operating officer for the City of Atlanta. Southern Voice regrets the error.

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local news

Court rulings threaten Backstreet hours

City yet to enforce ordinance that would close clubs at 4 a.m.

By CHRISTOPHER SEELY

Popular gay club Backstreet remains true to its slogan of "always open and pouring," despite a court order July 1 that gave the City of Atlanta authority to begin enforcing an ordinance that would curtail its operating hours and those of other 24-hour clubs.

But the Atlanta Police Department, the city agency charged with overseeing the ordinance, has not yet moved to enforce it, though officials said that is likely to change.

"The APD will be out in full force to make sure everyone is in compliance," said Marion Lee, a police spokesperson.

Lee would not elaborate on any possible police enforcement action.

Last week, U.S. District Court Judge Clarence Cooper denied a request from attorney Jackson Cook, who represents Backstreet and three other 24-hour clubs, for a temporary restraining order.

That ruling paved the way for the city to immediately begin enforcement of an ordinance passed in 2001 that trims the hours the club can sell alcohol: 9 a.m. to 4 a.m. weekdays, 9 a.m. to 2:55 a.m. Saturdays and 12:30 p.m. to midnight on Sundays.

Last month — during the Atlanta Pride Festival — a police messenger informed Backstreet and other clubs that they had to begin meeting requirements of the ordinance and needed to apply for a new license, according to Cook.

Also last week, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals refused to hear a request that Cooper's ruling be delayed.

Still before the court is an appeal of Cooper's March 10 ruling that reinforced the city's ability to enforce the 2001 ordinance. Cook filed a brief in the case. City attorneys have until Aug. 4 to respond.

Cook and officials with the Atlanta Police Department would not say if Backstreet has applied for a new license to sell alcohol.

If Backstreet is forced to comply with the 2001 ordinance, it would lose 90 percent of its business transactions that occur between the hours of 4 a.m. and 7 a.m., Cook has said.

Immediately after Cooper's July 1 ruling, Cook told Backstreet and his other clients to remain open around the clock, which it has since the ruling. But Cook said this week that is no longer his advice.

"I have discussed it with them, and what they do is up to them," Cook said. "They know the risk."

Backstreet Manager Michael Fritts did not say if the club would remain open 24-hours-a-day, deferring comment to Cook.

The city sticks by the legality of its ordinance.

"The City has the full authority of the law behind it in enforcing the ordinance," Deputy City Attorney Jerry DeLoach said in a statement last week.

Backstreet, along with 24-hour clubs Riviera, the Crystal Palace, and Club 112, sued to stop enforcement of the city ordinance in 2001 with the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia.

License suspensions

In a separate case, attorneys for Backstreet are scheduled to appear before Fulton County Superior Court Judge Wendy Shoob on July 29 at 10 a.m. to appeal a city-issued license suspension and fine, according to Shoob's judicial assistant.

On Jan. 29, Mayor Shirley Franklin announced the city would suspend the alcohol licenses of Backstreet and the Metro Video Bar for 30 days and levy $9,000 fines on each for alleged drug sales inside the venues.

The suspensions were set to take effect Feb.3, but Fulton County judges stopped them with injunctions while the bars appeal the city's decision.

A hearing for the Metro is scheduled for July 21 at 9:30 a.m. before Judge Stephanie Manis, who may or may not issue an immediate ruling, according to Alan Begner, an attorney for the Metro.

Lawyer recalls key role in sodomy case

Smith speaks to Atlanta audience on heels of Supreme Court win

By JOE CREA

Those who opposed overturning the anti-gay Texas sodomy law through the courts argued it was a states' rights issue, that the state should be the body that removes the law, not the courts.

Paul Smith, the gay attorney who successfully argued Lawrence v. Texas before the U.S. Supreme Court, said that numerous attempts to repeal the 30-year-old statute were made and none were successful.

Reflecting on the huge legal victory in the Lawrence case, Smith said the world has changed for the better, and the justices' June 26 opinion striking down the country's remaining sodomy laws reflects that position.

Attorney **Paul Smith** successfully argued the Lawrence v. Texas case before the U.S. Supreme Court earlier this year. (Photo by Liz Flyntz)

"The world just looks differently than it did 20 years ago," Smith said. "Many of the justices have come to know and work with gay people and realized times change and so can the Constitution."

Smith speaks to the Atlanta Executive Network, a gay business group, on July 17.

Smith lives with his partner of 10 years, Michael Dennis, in Washington, D.C. His law firm, Jenner & Block, worked closely with Lambda Legal on preparing the writ of certiorari and the oral arguments in the case. His firm has extensive Supreme Court experience.

"We had to convey to the court that this was a rare opportunity," Smith said. "While not many people were prosecuted under the Texas sodomy statute, we didn't want to undercut our argument. [The statute] had a lot of other daily effects. It was constantly cited in employment discrimination and adoption cases to name a few."

It remains to be fully seen how social conservatives will respond to the decision throwing out sodomy laws, but Smith said a large majority is "on our side."

"People feel that others should be left alone to make these types of choices, and I'm hopeful that the backlash will not be strong," Smith said.

Lawrence v. Texas was the ninth case Smith argued before the Supreme Court. He will argue another case next year involving congressional districts in Pennsylvania.

But Smith acknowledges that nothing will ever match his experience in the Lawrence case.

"It's such a huge, landmark decision," Smith said. "It will have lots of ramifications, and there will be no issue of anti-gay discrimination that won't be affected by this case for the better. A right of privacy has been cemented into the law."

Court ruling raises hopes, Page 15

MORE INFO

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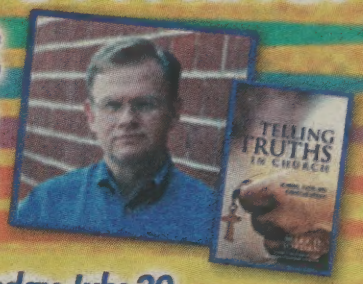

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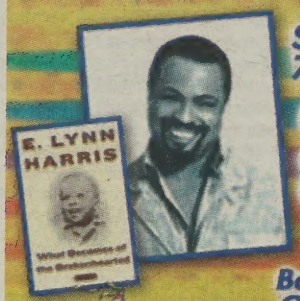

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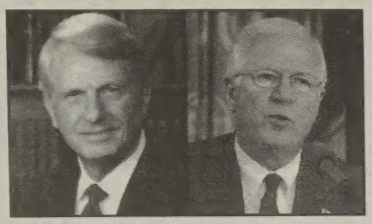
local news

Miller, Chambliss mum on domestic partner legislation

Bill from presidential candidate would eliminate taxes on DP benefits

By LOU CHIBBARO JR. and RYAN LEE



U.S. Sens. **Zell Miller** and **Saxby Chambliss**, both from Georgia, have not publicly taken a position on a proposed bill that would eliminate taxes on domestic partner benefit programs. (Photos by AP)

Georgia's two U.S. senators thus far remain mute on a proposed bill that would eliminate taxes on health benefits offered to domestic partners.

U.S. Sen. Bob Graham (D-Fla.), whose presidential candidacy is not picking up steam in states outside the South, attracted attention among gays and liberals last month when he proposed a tax break on employee health insurance for domestic partners.

Graham and Sen. Gordon Smith (R-Ore.) invited their Senate colleagues on June 13 to sign on as co-sponsors to a bill that would direct the IRS to treat employee health benefits for domestic partners the same way it treats health benefits for married spouses.

An aide to Graham said the two senators planned to introduce the bill before the July 4 holiday, but postponed it so they could provide potential co-sponsors with more information about the issue.

"Until [the bill] comes out of committee and goes to the senate floor, we don't have anything to say about it," said Michelle Hitt, a spokesperson for Sen. Saxby Chambliss, a Republican from Georgia elected last November.

Georgia Sen. Zell Miller, a conservative Democrat, was out of his Washington D.C. office and could not be reached for comment, according to Anthony Coley, Miller's spokesperson.

Political pundits called Graham's decision to sponsor a bill benefiting gay and unmarried straight couples part of a strategy to attract support from gays and liberal Democrats, who tend to vote in large numbers in Democratic presidential primaries.

Some gay activists acknowledged that Graham's motives may be due, in part, to electoral politics. But they said his legislation would draw attention to the current inequities faced by same-sex partners and the reasons many activists are calling for legalization of gay marriage.

Graham and Smith noted that under the current tax code, the portion of a health insurance premium for an employee's domestic partner that is paid by an employer is treated as taxable income for the employee. In contrast, an employer's payment of all or part of the health insurance premium for an employee's spouse is excluded from the employee's taxable income.

"Our legislation would provide consistent tax treatment for employer-provided health insurance for domestic partners," by ordering the IRS to stop treating domestic partner benefits for health insurance as taxable income, Graham and Smith said in a letter to their fellow senators.

The two said their proposed bill would also provide a tax break for employers that offer partner health benefits. The current tax code bases an employer's payroll tax liability on the taxable income of its employees. When the employer's contribution of benefits is treated as income for employees, the employer pays a higher payroll tax, Graham and Smith said.

"The tax code should not penalize employers for offering these benefits to their employees," the letter said.

Paul Anderson, a spokesperson for Graham's Senate office, said Graham and Smith would not announce the number of co-sponsors until the day of the bill's introduction.

He said the Human Rights Campaign, a national gay political group, was calling on its members to urge senators to sign on as co-sponsors for the bill, the Domestic Partner Health Benefits Equity Act of 2003.

The bill will be sent to the Senate Finance Committee, which is chaired by Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), a conservative who does not traditionally support gay legislation. Graham and Smith are members of the committee.

Grassley came under attack by Bush administration supporters and Senate conservatives earlier this year for agreeing to reduce the president's tax reduction proposal as a means of working out a deal with Senate Democrats. With that as a backdrop, and with other business on the committee's agenda, the question of whether Grassley would entertain a bill catering to same-sex domestic partners is uncertain at best.

MORE INFO

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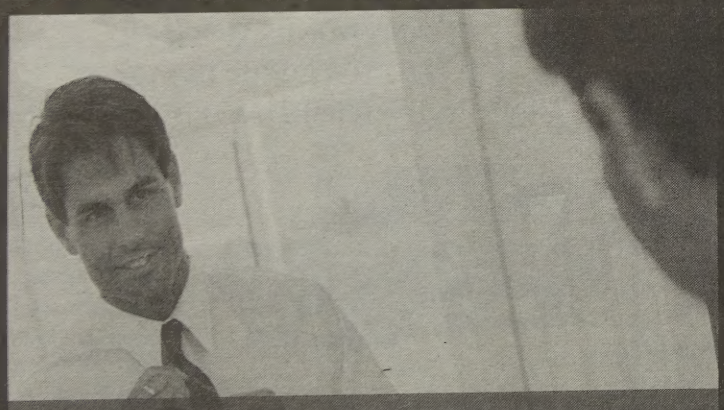

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local news

Bat attack defendant requests new trial

Aaron Price wants to replace his attorneys; Morehouse delays report on homophobia

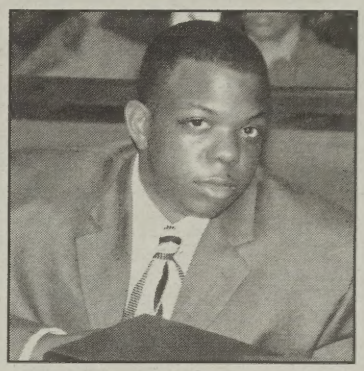
By RYAN LEE

Former Morehouse College student Aaron Price formally asked for a new trial last week, after being convicted June 11 of aggravated assault and aggravated battery for beating a classmate he perceived to be gay with a baseball bat in November.

In addition to the new trial request filed in Fulton County Superior Court, Price also asked to have his two 10-year prison sentences reconsidered and to be released on bond while his appeal is pending, said Erik Friedly, a spokesperson for the Fulton County District Attorney's Office, which prosecuted the case.

The motion also requests that Price be appointed a public defender to replace the three lawyers — Tony Axam, J.Kevin Franks and Woody Sampson — who represented him in last month's trial, according to staff for Superior Court Judge Jerry Baxter.

Price's former attorneys did not respond to interview requests by press time.



Aaron Price, convicted of beating a fellow Morehouse student in a dormitory shower, has asked for a new trial and wants to replace his attorneys. (Photo by Sher Pruitt)

The new trial motion is not a formal appeal, which would have to be filed by July 11 for consideration. August is the earliest Baxter could consider the motion, according to Baxter's staff.

During his trial last month, Price admitted to striking Love with a baseball bat in a Morehouse dormitory bathroom on Nov. 3, 2002. He said he did so to protect himself from Love, who he claimed peaked into his shower stall and threatened him with unwanted sexual advances.

Love admitted glancing into Price's stall, but said he was not wearing his glasses or contact lenses and mistook Price to be his roommate. Love said he apologized as soon as he realized his mistake, and denied either being gay or threatening Price.

The beating chipped four of Love's front teeth, left a permanent scar along the left side of his face and caused a blood clot to develop on his brain. During the trial, prosecutors and a medical expert said Price's actions left Love forever prone to seizures.

Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard also prosecuted Price for a hate crime based on sexual orientation, marking the first time a case invoking Georgia's hate crime law had reached a jury trial.

Price was acquitted on the hate crime charge, but the incident sparked a flood of criticism against Morehouse, as students and gay rights activists accused the school of fostering an environment of homophobia and intolerance.

In the wake of the beating, Morehouse officials created a special panel to examine homophobia at the historically black, all-male school.

The national ad-hoc committee formed after the attack is "comprised of experts in the areas of diversity, violence prevention, ethics, and human development, from academic, religious, corporate, and community environments," according to a Morehouse press release.

It is expected to evaluate the level of homophobia on the Morehouse campus and make recommendations for change to the school's president, Walter Massey.

A Blue Ribbon report from the panel was originally set for release at the end of June, but the report should be published later this month, said Toni Mosley, director of public relations at Morehouse.

The school also took a number of steps during the spring semester to address sexual orientation issues. They include hosting a Spiritual Awareness Week forum entitled "Sacred Text of Homosexuality," launching a campus-wide discussion campaign called "Expect Respect" and hiring a residential dean to conduct mandatory training programs "with sessions in harassment, sexual harassment, anger management, diversity and homophobia," according to school officials.

Advocacy director leaving AID Atlanta

Agency likely to restructure rather than fill empty position, official says

By JENNIFER J. SMITH

Chris Parsons, AID Atlanta's gay spokesperson, announced July 8 he will leave the agency later this month after eight years of service.

Parsons, 43, will step down July 18 as AID Atlanta's director of advocacy and community relations. He will begin a new position with Abbott Laboratories as an advocacy relations manager beginning July 28, he said.

"I resigned with mixed emotions certainly," Parsons said. "But the good news is I'm staying in Atlanta and I will continue to do the work I love. Plus, Abbott has a good relationship with AID Atlanta, so I'll get to be part of that."

Parsons joined AID Atlanta after serving as director of the Good Samaritan Project, a small Atlanta non-profit that teamed up "buddies" to offer support on HIV issues, he said.

The program merged with AID Atlanta in 1995. Parsons served as AID Atlanta's director of volunteer services until 1999, then oversaw the education department and combined the two departments at that time.

Parsons was promoted to acting chief financial officer and chief operating officer in 2001, before his current hybrid position was created last year, he said.

Ken Britt, chair of AID Atlanta's board of directors, praised Parson's service.

"He's been a great utility player over the years," said Britt, who is gay. "He's one of our all-stars and every time we have a need we're able to move Chris into that role.

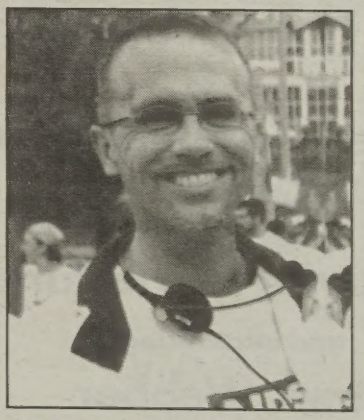
"Although we hate to see Chris go, we think it's a win-win situation because Abbott is a great supporter of AID Atlanta and hopefully with Chris on their team they'll continue to support us," he said.

AID Atlanta Executive Director Kim Anderson said the agency plans to continue to consult with Parsons.

"We're happy he'll be out there fighting HIV/AIDS and out fighting for clients," she said. "And we're happy he'll still be in Atlanta so we can still tap into his knowledge. He's still available and still part of the fight."

Parsons listed developing AID Atlanta's extensive educational programs and increasing the agency's profile nationally as career highlights.

His departure will leave AID Atlanta with only one openly gay director — Josh Newton, director of development — out of the agency's five remaining department heads. The agency also has three gay middle managers, according to Parsons.



After eight years at AID Atlanta, **Chris Parsons** is leaving the non-profit agency July 18 to pursue similar work in the private sector. (Photo courtesy AID Atlanta)

How Parsons will be replaced, and even whether he will be replaced, is still being discussed, according to Britt and Anderson.

"We've been planning a reorganization for awhile, and now Kim can do that without hurting anybody," Britt said. "She was the COO before she became executive director, and she's filled some of those roles. Maybe now we can bring in a director for human resources and they can take on some of Kim's responsibilities."

AID Atlanta "is not sure that we'll replace someone at that level in these fiscal times," Anderson said. "We probably won't post a position anytime soon."

Parsons' resignation comes on the heels of a difficult period for the non-profit.

In March 2002, long term Executive Director Tony Braswell announced his resignation. Anderson became executive director last July, just over a year after she joined the organization as chief operating officer.

AIDS Walk Atlanta, AID Atlanta's most prominent annual fund-raiser, posted lower-than-expected returns in both 2001 and 2002. The agency also lost $740,000 in federal Ryan White funding for its health care clinic in early 2002, after failing to produce an eligible nonprofit medical service provider by the annual application deadline.

A new federal grant enabled the clinic to reopen last August after being forced to close for several months — a period Parsons highlighted as the worst of his tenure.

Britt said the string of problems had all been solved.

"Those were all small things, but they're not connected and the current situation — Chris's resignation — shouldn't have any negative impact on AID Atlanta," he said.

local news

Pride press coverage growing more prominent

News outlets show increasing depth, diversity

By MIKE FLEMING

Local television reports and newspaper articles about last month's Atlanta Pride Festival showed that mainstream press coverage of the event increased in depth and complexity over previous years.

Gay activists and Pride organizers have long lamented that the little coverage past events received sometimes focused on extreme factions — such as drag queens and leather men — while ignoring more sedate participants.

"[Pride coverage] has become more inclusive and representative of our communities," said Donna Narducci, executive director of the Atlanta Pride Festival. "It's so important to show how a broad spectrum and diverse group of people can come together ... and local and national media is starting to understand that accuracy can be interesting."

Atlanta Pride tracks media coverage, Narducci said, adding that local gay press outlets, CNN, the four major local TV channels, the Associated Press as well as print outlets including the Atlanta Business Chronicle, Atlanta Journal-Constitution and Creative Loafing offered coverage of the recent event.

In addition to coverage in several newspapers, the four major metro Atlanta television stations sent reporters to Piedmont Park each day of the Atlanta Pride Festival last month. (Photo by Sher Pruitt)

In past years, the Loaf and AJC drew criticism for offering scant coverage of Gay Pride.

Last month, the AJC opened its Pride coverage on the June 26 cover of its entertainment pullout, Access Atlanta. The section devoted two pages to the festival.

Also that day, the City Life section profiled parade Grand Marshal Jim Marks, also known as camp drag fund-raiser Bubba D. Licious.

The AJC's coverage was bolstered with the June 26 decision from the U.S. Supreme Court overturning sodomy laws in 13 states. On June 27, the paper's top story — headlined "Gay sex ban overturned" — included reaction from Pride organizers.

The AJC also couched its June 29 Pride coverage in the sodomy decision. The Sunday section reported reaction from the family of Michael Hardwick, the gay Georgia man who lost his 1986 U.S. Supreme Court challenge to the state sodomy law. The law was later overturned by a state court.

That issue also included a listing of historic gay rights landmarks and an editorial cartoon on the sodomy decision. The paper devoted a quarter-page of space to three photos from the previous day of Atlanta Pride in Piedmont Park.

On June 30, a front page story wrapped up Pride statistics, although the focus again quickly shifted to the sodomy decision. The Living section's "Peach Buzz" column included an item about entertainment marketing at Pride.

Creative Loafing also showed an increase in its Pride coverage this year. In 2001, Atlanta Pride received only brief mention before and after the event. But for the second year, the paper's June 26 coverage gave Pride the same quirky and challenging attention it gives other Atlanta institutions with a four-page cover package that included calendars and columns by gay writers.

"The festival is a pretty significant annual event, and we cover it with the same vigor that we give, say, Music Midtown or the National Black Arts Festival," said Tray Butler, a gay staff writer at the paper.

The following week, Andisheh Nouraee's "Scene and Heard" column also plugged the event.

The Atlanta Business Chronicle ran two items about corporate sponsors for Pride. One focused on Delta Airlines' participation, and the other summarized major corporate sponsors.

On television, Narducci did seven on-camera interviews, including one from a Russian television outlet for the second year, she said. Glen Paul Freedman, vice chair of the festival's board of directors, did one TV interview before the parade. Footage from those sessions was repackaged and shown throughout the weekend, Narducci said.

In addition to interviews with Pride officials, the four major local stations put reporters in the park each day to cover various aspects of the gay experience at Pride and beyond.

"They incorporated both the celebratory nature of Pride — especially in light of the Supreme Court ruling — as well as the need to continue to work to obtain fully equality," Narducci said. "They also included some in-depth coverage of people from our community in sharing their stories, which makes it personal and allows readers [and] viewers that important insight into the reality of our daily lives."

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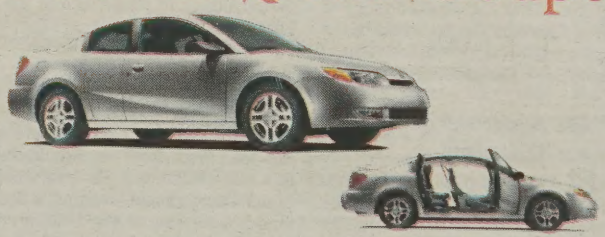

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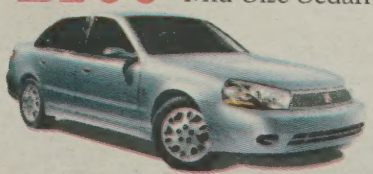

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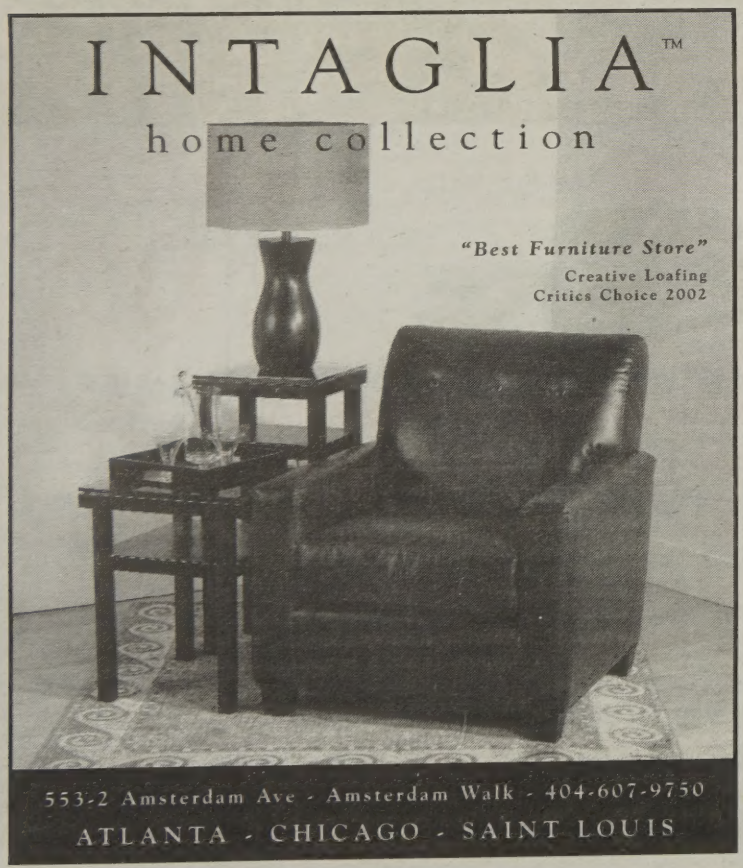
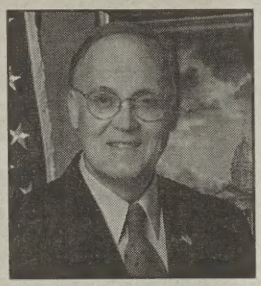


national news

Vermont governor wants more judicial restraint on court

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) — Gov. James Douglas said July 3 he would not use a "litmus test" in filling a vacancy on the state Supreme Court, but he said two landmark decisions on school funding and gay marriage showed insufficient judicial restraint. Douglas, a Republican, made the remarks at his weekly news conference, at which he also reiterated his call for the Judicial Nominating Board to send him a longer list of candidates to fill the court vacancy than the list it produced last month. "I really think the court needs to use as much restraint as possible," Douglas said. "And to look at the constitutional provision on requiring a sufficient number of schools in a community and come up with a requirement for a new school funding law is pushing it, very frankly." He also questioned the court's 1999 decision, that found unconstitutional the state's refusal to recognize the relationships of same-sex couples. The Legislature responded in the winter of 2000 by making Vermont the first state in the nation to offer legal recognition to gay and lesbian couples through civil unions. Former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean, a Democrat, signed the measure. He is now a candidate for his party's presidential nomination.



Vermont Gov. **James Douglas** (R) said he thinks courts need to use more restraint. It was Vermont's Supreme Court that forced that state to add the landmark civil unions law.

Ohio clerk certifies domestic registry petitions

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, Ohio (AP) — Backers of a domestic-partner registry for Cleveland Heights on Monday received certification of their petition to put legal recognition for unmarried couples on the November ballot. The registry would give legal recognition to both gay and straight unmarried partners, who could use the document in attempts to share employment benefits or inherit property. However, the registry would not be binding on courts, governments, hospitals or private companies. The City Council must approve the petition before it goes on the ballot, clerk Tom Malone said. "We anticipate council will want to send the issue to the voters and let them decide," said David Caldwell, a spokesman for Heights Families for Equality, the group that circulated petitions. City Council member Jimmie Hicks Jr. has said he will campaign heavily against the registry. Although registries have been created by municipal councils or state legislatures across the country, Cleveland Heights would be the first to create one through a vote, according to the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force.

Latino AIDS transgender group sues former N.Y. landlord

NEW YORK — The Hispanic AIDS Forum, New York City's leading Latino AIDS organization, is suing its former landlord for discrimination, according to a report on 365Gay.com. The landlord allegedly refused to allow HAF's transgendered clients to use the public restrooms in the building — effectively forcing HAF to relocate — because another tenant had complained about people using the "wrong" restroom. "The landlord made it very clear that he had no respect whatsoever for transgender people," Heriberto Sanchez Soto, executive director of HAF. Kesari Ruza, a volunteer lawyer, who, along with American Civil Liberties litigators, is preparing the lawsuit, said evicting HAF seriously impacted its ability to provide its services. "By forcing HAF to relocate, hundreds of Latino clients must now travel much farther for services," Ruza said. The lawsuit seeks unspecified damages, arguing that the landlord broke several state and local anti-discrimination laws.

Lesbian couple may challenge Utah adoption laws

SALT LAKE CITY — A lesbian couple in Utah may be challenging the state's three-year-old statute prohibiting gays from legally adopting children, according to the Salt Lake Tribune. "The law doesn't make sense to me," said Sonja Kaufman, the legal mother of one of her and her partner's two children. "They find me fit to parent one child and then say I can't parent the other one. I'm parenting [7-month old] Karson anyway. But there's that little bit of anxiety, knowing that, in a way, you're living on the edge." By planning to rely heavily on the recent Supreme Court decision striking down all sodomy laws, attorneys for the couple are looking to expand the ruling to other issues of equality. "All of the laws that discriminate against homosexuals in Utah have the same underpinnings — the sodomy law," attorney Laura Milliken Gray said. "They've always tried to use that as a sledgehammer to pound us over the head. That's gone now."

Nebraska attorneys battle over anti-gay amendment

LINCOLN, Neb. — State attorneys in Nebraska filed a brief recently in response to a suit challenging the state's constitutional amendment against same-sex unions, according to the Lincoln Journal Star. They are requesting that the judge throw out the case, arguing the amendment did not harm any resident because it repealed no existing laws. "Apart from their generalized ideological grievance, plaintiffs do not allege that there is any present or imminent domestic partnership law or policy that would likely be enacted in the absence of the [amendment]," the attorneys wrote in their brief. Amy Miller, an attorney with the Nebraska American Civil Liberties Union, told the Journal Star that her legal team "is in the process of drafting a response, which will ... argue [the amendment] does in fact prevent same-sex couples from equal protections."

From staff and wire reports

national news

MSNBC fires Savage after anti-gay verbal tirade

Popular author later apologizes on syndicated radio program

By CHRISTOPHER SEELY

Fifteen episodes into his television career, popular author and radio talk show host Michael Savage lost his MSNBC job on Monday over an anti-gay tirade to a crank caller.

On the July 5 broadcast of "Savage Nation," Savage lashed out against Bob Foster, a 39-year-old computer technician in Sacramento, Calif., who regularly calls television talk shows to rile the hosts and chronicles the exchanges on his Web site, EastCoastBob.com.

"I look for reactions," Foster told Southern Voice. "I do it for entertainment purposes. It's what I get out of the person I'm calling."

Foster's call to Savage began with a conversation about smoking, but it quickly turned ugly after Foster made a disparaging comment about Savage's teeth. Transcripts from the show are incomplete because some of the comments were unintelligible.

"I said, 'The Don and Mike Show should take over your show so you can go to a dentist appointment because your teeth are really bad,'" Foster said this week.

After Savage asked Foster if he was a sodomite, and Foster said, "Yes, I am," Savage's tirade began.

"Oh, you're one of the sodomites," he said. "You should only get AIDS and die, you pig."

MSNBC fired Savage on July 7, according to Jeremy Gaines, an MSNBC spokesperson. Boston radio station WRKO later suspended Savage's radio program, according to the Boston Globe.

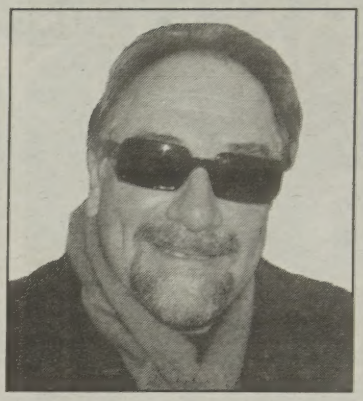
"Savage made an extremely inappropriate comment, and the decision was not difficult," Gaines said.

On Tuesday, Savage apologized on his Web site, MichaelSavage.com.

"If my comments brought pain to anyone, I certainly did not intend for this to happen," according to the Web posting. "I especially appeal to my many listeners in the gay community to accept my apologies for any inadvertent insults which may have occurred."

During his radio show on Monday, Savage said he signaled to the MSNBC production staff to take the caller off the air and said that he had mistakenly assumed that his brief rant against the caller would be taken out as well.

"But his insults continued in my ear piece, and I reacted to him personally as an individual who was attacking me," Savage told his radio listeners. "Trying to defend myself, I attacked him individually. Unfortunately, now my personal comments to this crank caller were broadcast on the air."



MSNBC fired **Michael Savage** on Monday after he verbally attacked a caller on his TV show and told him 'to get AIDS and die.' (Photo courtesy Russ Weiner)

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, a gay media watchdog group that organized protests over Savage's TV show and complained to its advertisers, credits itself for bringing Savage's anti-gay tirade to the attention of MSNBC executives.

"MSNBC was put in a place where they had to assess if they would keep journalistic integrity or Savage," said Chalee Snorton, GLAAD regional media spokesperson.

GLAAD will wait too see if MSNBC's decision has an impact on Savage's radio show, Snorton said.

But MSNBC was already aware of Savage's comments before hearing from GLAAD, Gaines said.

The show had a Nielsen rating of .2, with an average of 347,000 viewers each week, and MSNBC's viewer numbers for Savage's time slot were up 89 percent in June 2003, compared to June 2002, according to the network.

Getting Savage off television is only half the battle, according to Thomas Leavitt, co-founder of SavageStupidity.com, a Web site formed in May 2002 that joins MichaelSavageSucks.com in an effort to remove Savage from the radio airwaves as well as television.

"This guy makes Dr. Laura look like a pussycat," Leavitt said. "It was astonishing to me that when he was fourth-highest rated radio talk show host, he was invisible."

Oregon-based Talk Radio Network syndicates Savage's radio talk show, "The Savage Nation," which ranks fifth in the nation with an audience estimated at 6.5 million listeners daily, according to a 2002 study by Talkers Magazine. It is carried by about 320 stations.

In May, Talk Radio filed a $1.2 million lawsuit against SavageStupidity.com, TakeBackTheMedia.com and MichaelSavageSucks.com.

Ed Walsh contributed to this story.

CDC targets Internet-based researchers for grants

Web research useful, if done properly, activists say

By RYAN LEE

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention in Atlanta is contributing $500,000 in grants to researchers who use the Internet to survey men who have sex with men about their sex habits, particularly when it comes to HIV/AIDS.

Grants range from $125,000 to $250,000 each, and are earmarked for approximately four research teams.

The application deadline for the grants was July 9, but no information was available at press time about how many research teams applied. The awards could be distributed as early as Aug. 1.

The primary purpose of the project is to determine if Internet surveys are an adequate alternative to more traditional research methods like face-to-face or telephone interviews, according to CDC documents about the grants.

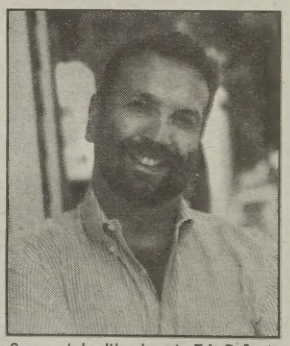
The project also considers whether the Internet is a viable way to reach men who do not frequent gay venues like clubs or community organizations.

"While several studies suggest that venue-based sampling is representative of most [men who have sex with men], an increasing proportion of [men who have sex with men] may be using the Internet to meet sex partners and may not be available for sampling through a more traditional, venue-based approach," the grant application states.

Eric Rofes, an author and gay health activist, said the grants may signal a positive change for the CDC.

"Generally the CDC has not been on the cutting edge, and this may or may not be a move in that direction," he said.

Rofes described the CDC's efforts to target gay men online as "skiddish, cautious and not particularly bold," but he added that he is encouraged by this latest initiative.



Gay men's health advocate **Eric Rofes** is cautious about online research into the sexual habits of gay men, but he lauds the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention for setting aside grant money for such projects.

Internet-based research is a growing field, and the early body of literature suggests sexual encounters made online are too often accompanied by risky sexual behavior.

"Similar to other high-risk venues of the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., bath houses and back rooms), the Internet may be a setting in which to meet new sex partners and potentially transmit HIV," according to research released in February by the Medical & Health Research Association of New York City.

That study recruited nearly 3,000 men using advertising banners on a popular gay Web site and featured a 60-item questionnaire about sexual behavior as well as alcohol and drug use. More than a quarter of the sample said they had more than 100 sex partners, and 6 percent reported having more than 10 partners in the past month.

"Most men met sex partners online, and they were more likely to have unprotected anal sex than those who met partners in other ways," the report said.

Internet-based sex research could provide important information, but the quality of results vary greatly and depend on the researcher's experience, methodology and overall understanding of the gay Internet culture, according to Rofes.

"There are many, many different methodologies," he said. "Everything from going into a chat room, to having a Web page to attract people to, to studying profiles and taking information from those."

Profiling is particularly prone to inaccurate results, as Web users may list and seek fantasies online that do not match their actual behavior, Rofes said.

Bryce Eberhart, director of corporate communications for PlanetOut, which operates online meeting place Gay.com, agreed.

"I think one of the biggest mistakes researchers make is they try to draw conclusions about offline behavior based on online surveys," Eberhart said.

The company has established limitations to the research it will host and an advisory board reviews proposals to ensure validity, ethics and respect for customer privacy, he said.

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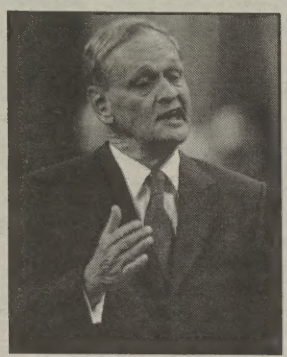
international news

British Columbia court allows same-sex marriages



British Columbia became the second Canadian province this week to allow same-sex marriages. Prime Minister **Jean Chretien** plans to have his government legalize gay marriage for all of Canada this fall.

TORONTO (AP) — British Columbia has become the second Canadian province to allow same-sex marriage under a court ruling. Two men were wed shortly after Tuesday's ruling in Vancouver. The decision by the province's Court of Appeal further increased pressure on the Canadian government to follow through with plans to rewrite federal law that defines marriage as between man and woman. An Ontario court issued a similar ruling last month, leading to more than 250 same-sex couples obtaining licenses to marry in Toronto. British Columbia's Appeal Court earlier ruled in favor of same-sex marriages, but gave the federal government a year to draft a new law redefining marriage. Gay rights groups then asked the court to reconsider the one-year delay after the Ontario ruling. The three-member B.C. Appeal Court panel said Tuesday it was unaware of any opposition to lifting the one-year delay. "It is also apparent that any further delay in implementing the remedies will result in an unequal application of the law between Ontario and British Columbia," the decision said.

Saudis lift block on gay Web site

SAUDI ARABIA — The Saudi Arabian government, which outlaws homosexual behavior, has lifted its Internet blocks on a Web site designed for gay Middle Easterners according to Gay.comUK. GayMiddleEast.com was blocked by Saudi officials who ignored repeated e-mails and faxes requesting that the blocks be removed. The Web site's manager, A.S. Getenio, suggested that the Saudi government may have eventually complied with the requests to avoid a publicity scandal in the United States, where it is currently investing millions of dollars in an advertising campaign to improve the country's image. "The ad campaign is designed to portray the kingdom as a peace loving, modern and enlightened state," Getenio told Gay.com. "We at [GayMiddleEast.com] hope that the Saudi authorities will leave the site unblocked and accessible to our readers, and that this is not a temporary move that will be reversed as soon as their ad campaign is over."

Singapore government now hiring gays

SINGAPORE — Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong announced recently that the government had reversed its previously exclusionary hiring policy toward gays, according to an article in the Straits Times. "In the past, if we know you're gay, we would not employ you," Tong told the Straits Times. "But we just changed this quietly. We know you are. We'll employ you." The Straits Times calls the new policy "disclose and we won't bother" — in contrast to the U.S. military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy — because the government would prefer to have employees who are open about their sexual orientation to avoid the potential of blackmail. The policy, which is standard with many Singapore firms in the private industry, is simply a statement of non-discrimination, but it seems not to provide protection beyond hiring, a fact the prime minister said will take care of itself with time.

Gay Cyprus man denied driver's license

CYPRUS — Because he was described on his military discharge paper work as having "psychological problems," a gay Cyprus man was denied a drivers license, according to Gay.com U.K. Military service in Cyprus is compulsory for all men, but common practice grants homosexuals an exemption from this requirement. However, there is no category of discharge based on sexual orientation, and the paperwork typically cites psychological reasons, including personality disorders or neuroses. The Cyprus ombudsman, Iliana Nicolaou, said the Defense Ministry on the island should change its policy and list the discharge under "medical reasons" so homosexuals can avoid undue prejudice. "Specifically, during the handling of these matters it must be taken into consideration that the sexual choices of these people attract social and moral skepticism, and consequently the voluntary or involuntary lack of action on the part of the authorities to regulate matters concerning homosexuals while at the same time they are subjected most of the time to daily discrimination," Nicolaou said.

Britain's transsexuals win the right to marry

LONDON — Britain's government has granted its estimated 5,000 transgendered citizens who have undergone a medical sex change operation the legal right to marry and have their gender changed on their birth certificate, according to a report in the Guardian. The Constitutional Affairs Department plans to announce a bill to bring the changes within the next 10 days. It will include laws that will prevent employers from knowing an employee's sexual history and that anyone who has undergone a sex change procedure will be recognized as the sex they identify with after the operation. Insurance companies will also be told to treat transsexuals as the sex they identify with and will allow men who change their identity to women to begin collecting on the state pension at the age of 60.

From staff and wire reports

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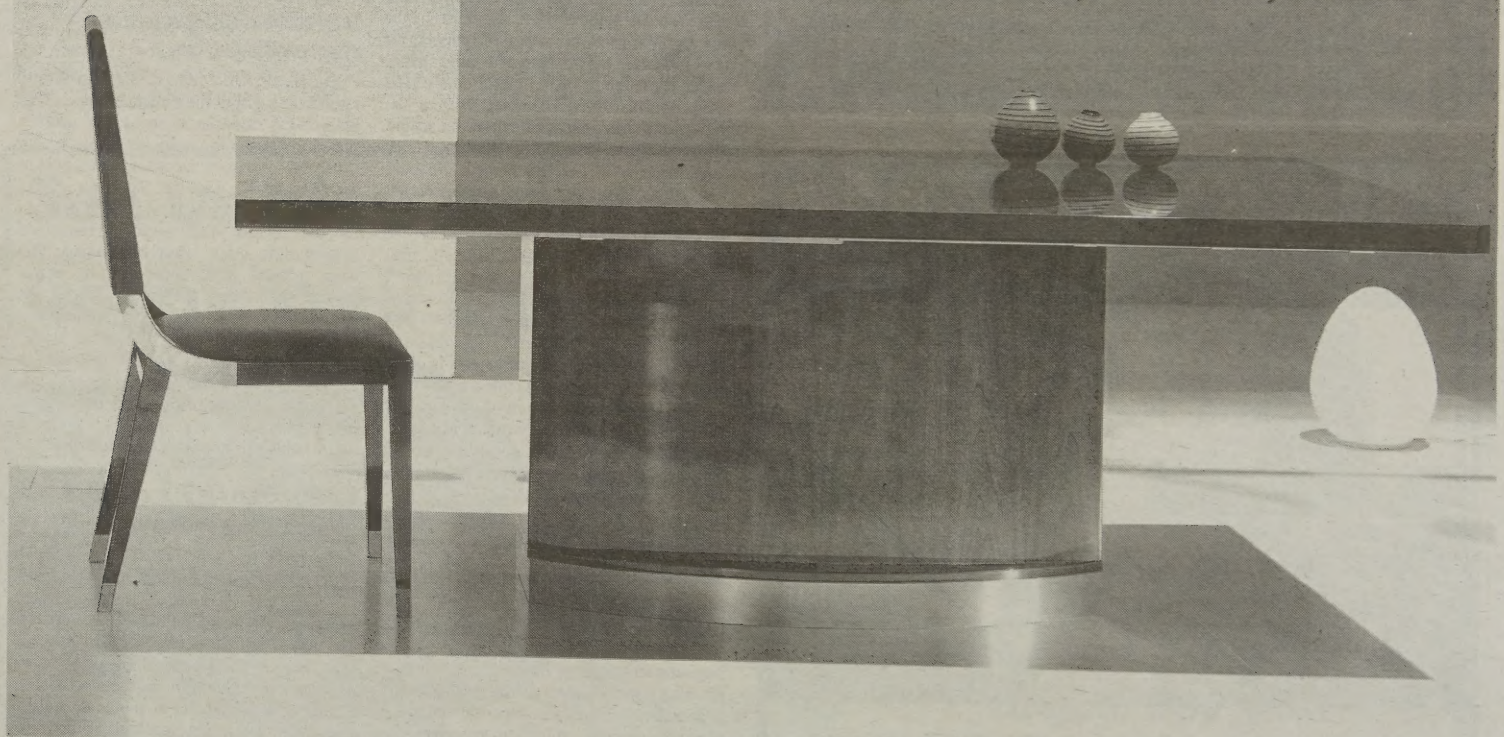

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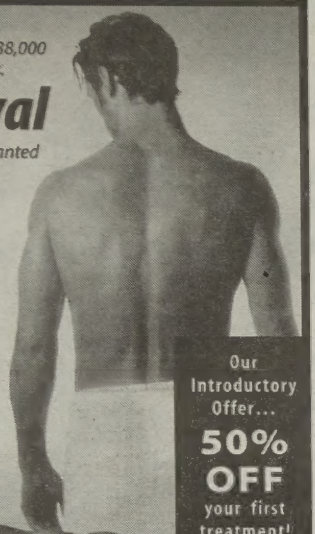

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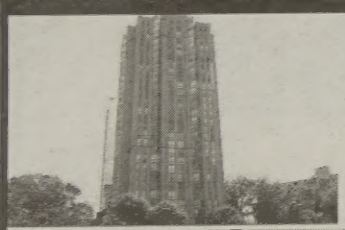

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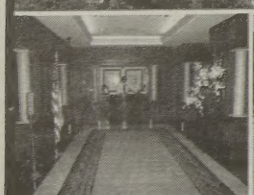

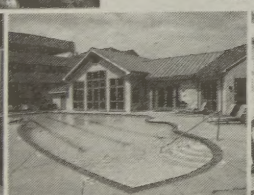

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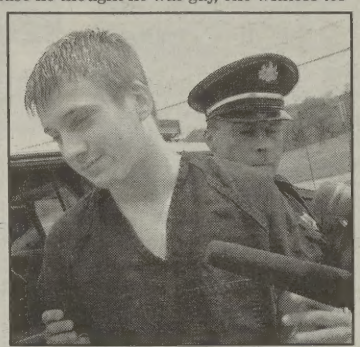
Witnesses say teen killed brother he thought was gay

GREENSBURG, Pa. (AP) — A teenager beat his brother at least 18 times in the head with a hammer and a club out of hatred, and because he thought he was gay, one witness testified during the teen's murder trial. Ian Bishop, 15, told Heather Exton that he also had "a plan to kill his whole family" the night of April 19, 2002, at their home in Hempfield, Exton testified Monday. Westmoreland County prosecutors say Bishop, who was 14 at the time, beat his 18-year-old brother, Adam, to death, put him in a bathtub and bragged about it to his friends. Prosecutors are seeking a first-degree murder conviction, which carries a life sentence without parole. Attorneys for Bishop say he is innocent and that the fatal blows were struck by someone else. Attorney Tom Ceraso suggested it was Robert Laskowski, now 16, who struck most of the blows. Laskowski also is charged with first-degree murder in connection with Adam Bishop's death.



A key witness said that **Ian Bishop** brutally murdered his older brother out of hate because he thought he was gay. (Photo by Scott Spangler/AP)

Okla. executes man who used 'gay panic' murder defense

McALESTER, Okla. (AP) — Mark Howard watched his father's killer smile and wink and apologize to a family other than Howard's own. But John E. Howard's son and brother had not come to Oklahoma's death chamber Tuesday hoping for remorse in Robert Don Duckett's last words. "We were here to pay respects to my father," Mark Howard said after watching Duckett die in Oklahoma's 11th execution this year. Duckett was a 24-year-old prison escapee when he killed Howard, 53, in 1988 at the Oklahoma City apartment they briefly shared. He beat his victim with a fire poker and a wooden ashtray stand. Prosecutors said Howard was killed because he wanted Duckett to move out. The defense alleged that Howard made a sexual pass at Duckett, who suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder after a prison rape. Duckett was serving time for a 1983 robbery and beating when he escaped from prison in 1987. Howard's family had the crime scene photos on their minds when they watched Duckett smile and then wink at his attorney. A second later, as a deadly mix of drugs flowed, the 39-year-old puffed out a final breath and was still.

Prosecutors ask judge to delay Rudolph trial

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama (AP) — Prosecutors are requesting permission to seek the federal death penalty against serial bombing suspect Eric Rudolph, according to his attorneys. Without giving details, court papers filed by Rudolph's attorneys say federal prosecutors in Birmingham are asking the Justice Department for permission to try Rudolph, 38, on a capital charge in a fatal abortion clinic bombing. Rudolph is also accused of bombing a gay club in Atlanta. The final decision on seeking the death penalty in Rudolph's case is up to Attorney General John Ashcroft, who has not said whether he would approve such a request. Federal prosecutors, in asking to delay Rudolph's trial, said a decision by the attorney general could take several months. U.S. Attorney Alice Martin has been quoted as saying she wanted to seek the death penalty against Rudolph, but prosecutors are not required to file papers notifying the court of their plans until a final decision is reached. Also, federal prosecutors have asked a judge to postpone Rudolph's August trial date, saying the case is too complex to prepare by then.

Teen accuses anti-gay pastor of propositioning him

PHILADELPHIA — Rev. C. Stephen White, known throughout the Philadelphia area for his anti-gay remarks, is accused of proffering a 14-year old male for oral sex in exchange for money, according to a report in the Philadelphia Inquirer. The teen alleges that White solicited oral sex from him when he drove up next to the youth and requested information about adult bookstores. The teen refused and, according to police reports, memorized the license plate of the car and reported it to his aunt. The preacher is known for inflammatory "street sermons" about homosexuality, claiming they will "go to hell." White runs a ministry for children in North Philadelphia andhas proclaimed his innocence through his attorney and is being held in prison with a $100,000 bail.

Appeal begins for man convicted of killing Dutch politician

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands (AP) — A Dutch court begins hearings this week to reconsider the 18-year prison sentence given to the killer of populist politician Pim Fortuyn. Lawyers for Volkert van der Graaf argue that the sentence is harsh, while prosecutors say they want the animal rights activist to serve life in prison. Fortuyn was an outspoken gay academic who shook up polite Dutch politics by blaming rising crime on Muslim immigrants. He was hated by many leftists and loved by many blue-collar Dutch who felt he was the only politician willing to address their concerns. His attorneys note that the usual sentence for a single murder is 12 to 16 years in the Netherlands, where there is no death penalty and life sentences are rarely handed down.

From staff and wire reports

national news

Supreme Court ruling 'just the beginning,' activists say

Lambda, other groups set sights on 'laws and culture' after sodomy decision

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

More than 100 people rallied at the intersection of 10th Street and Piedmont Avenue on June 26 after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned sodomy laws in 13 states. (Photo by R.O. Youngblood)

WASHINGTON — Emboldened by the U.S. Supreme Court's June 26 decision overturning the nation's sodomy laws, gay rights attorneys say they are mapping plans to use the landmark decision as a springboard to improve the lives of gay people in all sectors of American society.

"Our victory ... was just the beginning," said Kevin Cathcart, executive director of Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund, the group that organized the legal case that led to the high court's decision known as Lawrence v. Texas.

"In corporate board rooms, state legislatures and neighborhoods all across the country, this ruling has sparked a profound dialogue about the rights of lesbians and gay men in this country," Cathcart said. "We're on stronger ground than ever before to fight for gay couples, parents, employees and students to win fairness in every area of life."

Lambda outlined some of its plans for using the Lawrence decision in future efforts in a newly created "LGBT Equality" Web site launched on July 2. The group states on the site that it will take immediate steps to capitalize on the court decision to more aggressively push for "recognition of same-sex relationships" and to protect legal rights for gay parents and their children. The plans also call for securing employment protections for gays and transgendered persons and to ensure that gay youth are no longer subjected to violence and harassment in schools.

Attorneys with Lambda and other gay groups have said the court's decision would have a dramatic effect in the 13 remaining states that had sodomy laws, particularly on gay adoption and child custody cases. Officials in a number of those states have denied custody rights and adoption on the grounds that gay men and lesbians were "habitual" violators of sodomy laws, making them criminals in the eyes of the law.

Now, legal experts say, state officials and courts in charge of adoption and child custody decisions can no longer use sodomy laws to discriminate against gays seeking custody rights or applying for adoptions.

Patricia Logue, Lambda's legal director, said Lambda and other gay legal groups believe the Lawrence decision's impact on gays in the military is less clear. She said the groups are studying whether the decision could be used to overturn the Pentagon's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, which bars gays from serving openly in the military.

"It's a little too soon now to determine what the impact will be on the military," said Steve Ralls, spokesperson for the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, which advocates on behalf of gay service members.

Ralls said SLDN is unsure whether the Lawrence decision could be used to overturn the anti-sodomy clause in the Uniformed Code of Military Justice. Military authorities continue to use the UCMJ anti-sodomy clause to prosecute gay service members.

Under the UCMJ, service members charged with sodomy are subject to a court martial, a discharge from the service and a possible jail term. Authorities have used sodomy charges to pressure service members into accepting discharges on grounds of homosexuality, SLDN has said.

"Repealing the military's sodomy statute would not repeal 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,' Ralls said. "But it would

Please see SODOMY DECISION on Page 50

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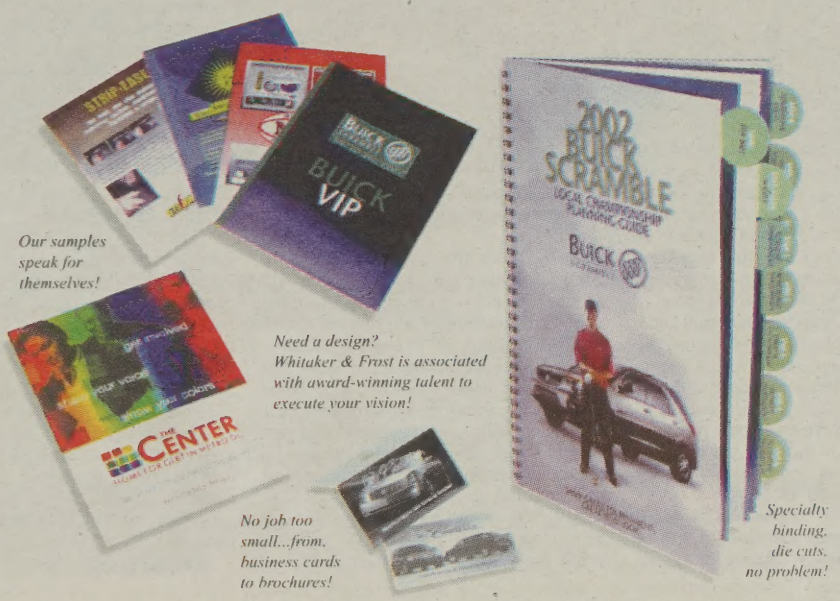
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national news

Ruling expected in Mass. on gay marriage

Decision could impact laws across the United States

By JOE CREA

BOSTON — The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court is poised to issue a ruling — possibly as early as this week — in a case that many gay activists predict will legalize gay marriage in Massachusetts.

If the court requires the state to open up marriage to same-sex couples, the decision may dramatically alter the legal landscape for gay and lesbian couples in Massachusetts, and possibly the country, according to some legal experts.

A ruling on the case could come as early as this Friday, July 11. Under court rules, decisions are to be rendered within 130 days of oral argument in a case. That deadline would fall this weekend in the marriage case, making a decision likely either this Friday, July 11, or Monday, July 14. But exceptions have been made in the past for controversial rulings, so a ruling is not guaranteed on that timeline.

But Jennifer Levi, a senior staff attorney for Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders and co-counsel in the case, cautioned that the state's high court might not rule in favor of the plaintiffs and could throw the matter back to the legislature.

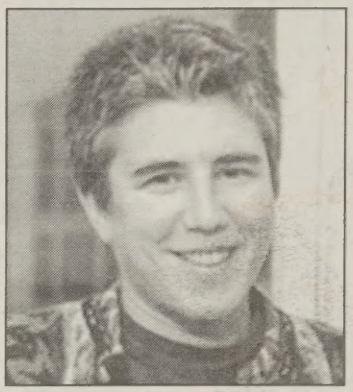
"That's what they did in Vermont," Levi said. "Or we could lose and the court could say for some reasons that the guarantees of equality under the state's constitution do not apply to gay and lesbian couples."

The Vermont Supreme Court ruled in December 1999 that excluding same-sex couples violated their rights under the state's constitution. But rather than striking down the law, the court gave the state legislature one year to find some remedy for the inequity. The legislature and then-Gov. Howard Dean, now a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, responded by adopting "civil union" legislation that created "separate but equal" legal recognition for gay couples.

Opponents of gay marriage in Massachusetts say that if the court legalizes same-sex marriage, thousands of gay and lesbian couples from other states will flock to Massachusetts to get married. Then, they will return to their home state, where their marriages may not be acknowledged, creating a tidal wave of lawsuits.

"One of our arguments all along has been that [the gay marriage debate] is a legislative matter not a judicial one," said Ron Crews, executive director of the Massachusetts Family Institute. a group opposed to gay marriage.

Crews, a former Georgia legislator, said that 37 states and the federal government have Defense of Marriage Acts on their books defining marriage as the union of a man and woman. Nebraska and three other states have taken their respective DOMAs a step further and imposed a "super" DOMA that not only bans recognition of same-sex marriage, but any kind of recognition of same sex relationships, including domestic partnerships and civil unions.



Jennifer Levi was the co-counsel on the case that could legalize same-sex marriage in Massachusetts. A ruling on the case is expected by Monday. (Photo courtesy of GLAD)

Traditionally, states have denied same-sex couples rights because of their DOMA laws, Crews said. But he added that things would be different if a gay couple from Georgia got married in Massachusetts and brought back to their home state a marriage license instead of a domestic partnership certificate.

"Even before you get to the initial question, 'How do other states treat marriages that a couple entered into lawfully?' that's a common law question that the courts address consistently," Levi said. "But once you get to the constitutional question, 'Can it trump DOMA?' Well, that's another question."

southern voice COVER STORY

Levi said gay couples were likely to challenge anti-gay marriage laws that she said single out gay couples for discrimination. She also said that many of the legal cases would seek to determine if state and federal DOMA laws are in violation of the U.S. Constitution's Full Faith & Credit Clause, which holds that states must "recognize the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of other states."

"It does seem to me that the Full Faith & Credit Clause is brought to bear on the recognition of marriage," agreed Sue Hyde a field director for the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force in Massachusetts, a public and political advocacy group.

"This is why our opponents are desperate, at both the state and federal level, by implementing statutory and constitutional prohibitions. They are stumbling over themselves to get these prohibitions in place because the Full Faith & Credit Clause would require recognition of same-sex couples across state lines," she said.

Legal scholars who have researched the topic have noted that some courts have found an exception to the Full Faith & Credit Clause when accepting another state's laws is found to be against "the public policy" of the state. Older cases have applied this "public policy" exception, for example, to allow states the option of not recognizing polygamous marriages from Utah.

Mass. amendment postponed

Crews said that the state's joint-judiciary committee heard a measure that would amend the state's constitution to define marriage as the union of a man and woman. It has now been presented to the state's Constitutional Convention, which has postponed any action on the bill until Nov. 12. The bill has 13 co-sponsors.

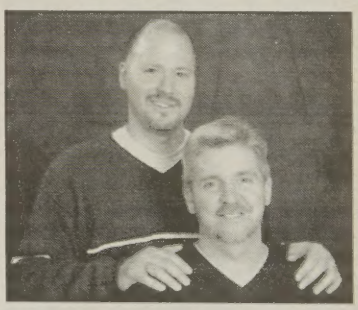
The state's constitution could not be amended until 2006 because the process takes two legislative sessions, Crews said.

But should the highest court in Massachusetts legalize gay marriage and order the state to issue marriage licenses from now until 2006 when the constitution may be amended, Crews said, he was uncertain of the fate of marriage certificates "already existing" at the time the amendment is passed.

A similar amendment effectively banning gay marriage was proposed in Massachusetts last summer, but State Sen. Tom Birmingham (D) refused to let the Constitutional Convention hear or vote on the proposal. Proponents of the measure, who collected 100,000 signatures from citizens, cried foul and said they were denied "a referendum process."

Levi said that it was unlikely that the state's constitution would be amended.

"The most recent public opinion poll demonstrates that the majority of Massachusetts citizens support equality for marriage for gay and lesbian couples," Levi said. "If people were asked to vote on this question [of a state amendment], many would see the specific harm that a constitutional amendment would have on their neighbors and their children's class-



Ed Balmelli (left) and **Mike Horgan** are two of the plaintiffs in the Massachusetts court case that could legalize gay marriages in that state. (Photo courtesy of GLAD)

mates' parents. I believe voters would resoundingly reject that kind of a wholesale exclusion that would have a devastating effect on those relationships that will hopefully be recognized."

Crews also acknowledged the great deal of time and effort it would take to amend the state's constitution and allowed that 2006 would be "political unknown territory."

"Regardless of the ruling, we are pressing ahead and our state legislator [Rep. Philip Travis (D-Rehoboth, Mass.)], who is sponsoring the amendment, has agreed to press ahead for a vote in the constitutional convention," Crews said.

Plaintiffs vow fight regardless of ruling

Ed Balmelli and Mike Horgan, who will mark their nine-year anniversary this December, knew that their commitment ceremony in Massachusetts a few years ago would not amount to much legally.

Ron Crews, a former Georgia lawmaker who is now executive director of the anti-gay Massachusetts Family Institute, said gay marriage is a matter for lawmakers, not judges. (Photo courtesy Massachusetts Family Institute)

That fact was made apparent to them when a friend of theirs died at home and the partner of the deceased couldn't sign the coroner's release to have the body removed because the survivor was not a "next of kin."

"That was scary and prompted my partner and me to get wills drawn up, powers of attorney and that sort of thing," Balmelli said. "It gets expensive when you consider that for just $25 you can get a marriage license in the state of Massachusetts."

Balmelli and his partner soon joined six other couples in Massachusetts and filed a lawsuit arguing that the freedom to marry the person of one's choice is protected under the state's constitution. Many independent organizations, from the Boston Bar Association to the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts have also joined the plaintiffs.

GLAD filed the suit, Goodridge vs. Department of Public Health, in April 2001.

Balmelli said he and his fellow plaintiffs will keep fighting for marriage rights, regardless of the court's ruling.

"I have many [straight] friends who say, 'You know, I think you and your partner are wonderful people and are deserving of all the rights we have as a married couple but I think you need to call [gay marriage] something else,'" Balmelli said.

"And I always say, 'Well, if we are going to be hung up on a word, then we should start breaking down all aspects of marriage.' If someone is divorced and gets remarried, it should be called 'remarriage' not 'marriage' and then we should have 'special marriage' and 'secondary marriage.' When I put the argument that way, many of my friends say, 'OK, I see what you mean.'"

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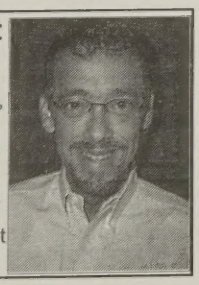
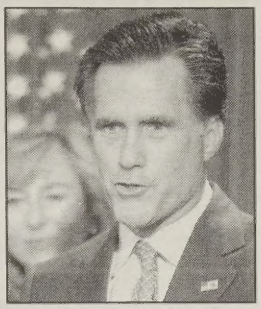


medical report

AIDS funding cuts in Mass. concern service providers

WORCESTER, Mass. (AP) — The state's nearly 40 percent cut in AIDS spending over the last few years could lead to a rise in the infection rate and a spike in the death rate in a few years, service providers say. The state spent $51.1 million on HIV/AIDS programs during the 2001 fiscal year. That was reduced to $41.4 million in 2002 and $35.8 million in 2003. Last month, a legislative conference committee cut Gov. Mitt Romney's request for AIDS funding by nearly $4 million to $31.9 million for fiscal 2004, which began on Tuesday. "We're still working on assessing the impact and the areas we will need to make reductions in," Roseanne Pawelec, a spokesperson for the state Public Health Department, told the Telegram & Gazette of Worcester. The department is prioritizing counseling and testing services over some of the client support services that cover child care for people with AIDS, as well as respite care for family members who are caregivers.



The Massachusetts legislature cut $4 million from the $35.9 million Gov. **Mitt Romney** requested in AIDS funding. (Photo by Michael DwyerAP)

Viagra becoming 'party drug' for gay men, researcher says

SAN FRANCISCO — A recent survey found that nearly a third of gay and bisexual men in San Francisco have taken Viagra at least once, according to a PlanetOut.com report. Researchers also learned that HIV-positive men are especially likely to use the anti-impotency drug. The survey did not ask the 837 men specifics on why they take the drug. "But I think it would be safe to say that a large percentage of the people we spoke to are using it recreationally," said Jed Herman, associate program director at Stop AIDS, which helped produce the survey. "I don't think anybody would challenge the notion that it's become a party drug." Researchers believe that the reason HIV-positive men use the drug more may be because of side effects of their medication to treat HIV. "We also think that some of the common side effects of some of the [AIDS cocktail] drugs are sexual dysfunction and lack of libido," Herman said. Nearly 44 percent of the men in the survey said they got Viagra from friends, and 10 percent said they got it off the Internet. The remainder said they get it from their doctor.

$2.8 million grant to fund study of HIV in women

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — A $2.8-million federal grant will enable a Miriam Hospital researcher to examine how HIV acts in the female genital tract. Dr. Susan Cu-Uvin, director of the Samuel & Esther Chester Immunology Center at the hospital, is studying where the virus concentrates, where it hides, how it replicates and how resistant it is to antiviral drugs. The grant finances five years of research by Cu-Uvin. Her findings may lead to the development of medications to prevent sexual and mother-to-child transmission of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, the Providence Journal reported. The money was awarded to the hospital's center for AIDS research, a collaboration among Tufts University and Brown University. It is one of 19 such federally funded centers located at academic medical centers throughout the U.S. This year, the center received $43 million in federal funding.

Chiron settles European antitrust complaints over HIV, hepatitis tests

EMERYVILLE, Calif. (AP) — Chiron Corp. Monday said it settled antitrust complaints by European blood banks over the pricing of its hepatitis and HIV tests. Chiron, the Emeryville-based biotechnology company, said the Commission of the European Communities had accepted a joint settlement proposal made by Chiron and its European licensee, F. Hoffmann-La Roche. In October 2001, the German Red Cross Donation Service & Working Society of Physicians filed a complaint with the commission alleging that Roche's prices for its blood-screening kits were unreasonable and should be prohibited. The complaint was eventually joined by groups from the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Finland and Luxembourg. Chiron said it resolved the complaints by modifying licensing agreements that allow Hoffman-La Roche to use Chiron's technology in hepatitis C and HIV-1 blood-testing kits.

Caribbean leaders say AIDS threatens area's development

MONTEGO BAY, Jamaica (AP) — Caribbean leaders called AIDS the single biggest threat to the region's development and said July 5 that finding cheaper drugs is the key to halting the spread of the disease. About 500,000 people in the Caribbean have the deadly disease, threatening to cripple the labor force as it prepares for free-trade and increased competition, St. Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister Denzil Douglas told reporters on the final day of a Caribbean summit. The number does not include Cuba, where infection rates are low. "HIV/AIDS continues to be the main threat to the development of the region," said Douglas, who oversees health matters in the 15-member Caribbean Community. Officials are conducting a study to determine the economic impact of the disease in the Caribbean, which has the world's highest infection rate after sub-Saharan Africa, he said. AIDS is the leading cause of death in several Caribbean countries, including Haiti and the Bahamas.

From staff and wire reports

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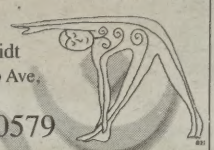

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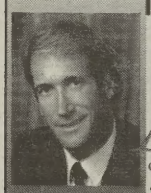

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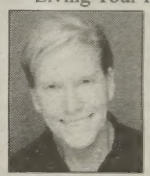

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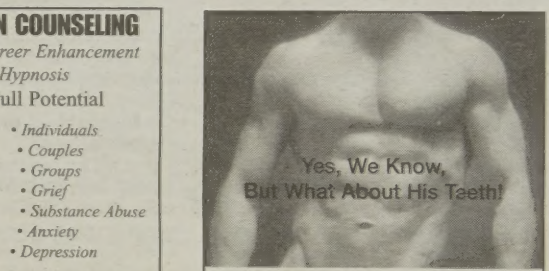

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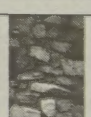

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national news

Shopping for equality

Wal-Mart expands non-discrimination policy, while Target still top discount chain on gay rights

By LAURA DOUGLAS-BROWN

Wal-Mart, the discount chain famous for "rolling back" prices, finally rolled forward on gay issues last week, announcing that it expanded its corporate non-discrimination policy to include sexual orientation.

The move catches Wal-Mart, the nation's largest private employer with more than 1 million people, up to struggling competitor Kmart, which has protected gay employees from job bias since April 2001.

But both discount chains continue to lag far behind trendier marketer Target, which maintains a longstanding gay-inclusive non-discrimination statement and is the only one of the three major discount chains to offer domestic partner benefits to employees.

For Wal-Mart, the policy change represents "the right thing to do," according to corporate spokesperson Tom Williams.

"We want all of our associates to feel they are valued and treated with respect, with no exceptions," Williams said. "When you look at our growth in this country, it requires us to be a desirable employer.

"Clearly stating our policy of respect for everyone regardless of sexual orientation helps us recruit talented employees who otherwise might not feel comfortable applying at Wal-Mart," he said.

The move sparked predictable ire from social conservatives, but gay rights advocates called it part of a growing trend.

The Family Research Council, a conservative Washington-based think-tank, posted a "news headline" on its Web site calling Wal-Mart's policy change "a gratuitous slap at those who consider homosexual behavior something society needs protection from, rather than protection for."

Kristin Hansen, FRC media director, declined further comment on Wal-Mart's decision.

"We do not do interviews with and gay and lesbian newspapers," she said. "It's a longstanding policy because we don't feel it is an objective approach to the issues."

Peter LaBabera, an analyst with the similarly conservative Culture & Family Institute, called Wal-Mart's policy change "a big loss" for gay rights opponents.

"They're big, and they have such a wholesome image. We hope there is a reaction," he told the Wall Street Journal.

Wal-Mart's move brings to 318 the number of Fortune 500 companies that include sexual orientation in non-discrimination policies, and leaves Exxon Mobil as the only one of the Fortune 500's top 10 that doesn't specifically ban job bias against gays.

"It's monumental — this is really a watershed moment for corporations," said Zan McColloch-Lussier, campaign director for the Pride Foundation, a Seattle-based non-profit that helped lobby Wal-Mart for the change.

"This is the largest private employer in the country, and it's not a company known for being progressive," he said. "Yet they realized in order to be a competitive and fair employer, you have to have a non-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation."

Wal-Mart, which cites 1.4 million employees worldwide, all of whom are covered under the new policy, ranks first on the Fortune 500 list of the country's largest companies.

"This is the number one company, so I think anyone can do this," McColloch-Lussier said.

Target still a gay-favorite

Wal-Mart is the nation's largest retailer and ranked high with gay consumers even before changing its policy.

But competitor Target posts disproportionately high popularity numbers with gays, likely in part because of its more gay-inclusive policies, according to Bob Witeck, CEO of Witeck-Combs Communications, a Washington-based firm that specializes in marketing to gays.

An online consumer poll conducted in March and April 2002 by Witeck-Combs and research firm Harris Interactive surveyed a cross section of 1,787 adults nationwide. Some 1,683 identified as heterosexual, and 104 identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered.

Wal-Mart ranked first among both gay and straight consumers asked "which of the following stores have you shopped at most the past year." Target placed second for both groups out of the seven stores in the survey, which did not include Kmart.

But percentages differed dramatically among gay and straight shoppers for both discount chains. Some 38 percent of gays said they shopped at Wal-Mart most, and 47 percent of heterosexuals listed Wal-Mart first. Some 33 percent of gay respondents put Target first, compared to only 18 percent of heterosexuals.

"The distance between them is significant," Witeck said. "Gay people think Target represents them well — it presents an aesthetic popular with gay people and a gay-friendliness they appreciate.

"With nicknames like 'Tar-Gay,' it's even part of the language and the popular culture," he said.

Policies at Target Corporation, which also includes Mervyn's and Marshall Fields department stores, back up its gay-friendly reputation. The company began offering domestic partner benefits in 1998, the only one of the three discount chains to do so.

"Because we have a very varied workforce, we certainly wanted to make sure everyone felt included, and we wanted to make sure we are competitive in the market place," said Target spokesperson Carolyn Brookter.

Target is also the only company of the three to have a recognized constituency group for gay employees, the Target GLBT Network. Kmart and Wal-Mart don't have any employee constituency groups, according to company officials.

Wal-Mart recently amended its non-discrimination policy to include sexual orientation, but Kmart has had such a policy since 2001. Target continues to lead the race on gay employment policies as the only one of the three major discount retailers to offer domestic partner benefits. (Photos by R.O. Youngblood; photo illustration by John Nail)

For profiles of Kmart, Target, and Wal-Mart, click on www.sovo.com

Target's gay group cites about 400 members, mostly in Target's Minneapolis headquarters, according to co-chair Scott Mayer, a senior manager of community relations.

"I think in general Target values individuality," Mayer said. "Target has a culture where they appreciate differences in folks — whether they are lesbian, gay, transgendered or whatever, everyone is valued for the contribution they make."

Trend towards inclusion

Wal-Mart's policy change came almost two years after competitor Kmart expanded its non-discrimination policy to include sexual orientation. Target's "long-standing" policy was in place for so many years that officials couldn't immediately recall when it was approved, Brookter said.

Kmart amended its policy in April 2001 because "we think of ourselves as an inclusive organization," said Maria Seyrig, manager of corporate communications for the company. "It was important to have that expression in there."

Like Target, Kmart provides donations to gay-specific causes, but Seyrig said the funding is limited.

"You have to understand that Kmart just emerged from Chapter 11 [bankruptcy] and we've been under that umbrella for about the last two years, so we haven't really been able to give money to anybody," she said.

Kmart also does not offer domestic partner benefits, which Seyrig said may be related in part to the company's financial woes, which forced it to cut back on existing benefits including educational reimbursements.

"Benefits are an ongoing process, and we continue to look at and consider what we would want to offer and not offer," she said.

Wal-Mart isn't considering offering the benefits, according to Williams, the company's spokesperson.

"We don't offer benefits to people who are not married, regardless of sexual orientation, and we have no plans to change it at this time," Williams said.

Wal-Mart changed its non-discrimination policy after input from employees and groups like the Pride Foundation that own shares of the company's stock, and McColloch-Lussier said he hopes additional progress can be made.

"We hope to continue the dialogue," he said.

The Pride Foundation, which offers gay-related grants and scholarships, owns about 300 shares of Wal-Mart stock, according to McColloch-Lussier.

As part of the Equality Project, an umbrella group that lobbies companies through shareholder resolutions, leaders from the Pride Foundation, Trillium Asset Management, Walden Asset Management and ISIS Asset Management met with Wal-Mart officials in September 2001 to discuss the company's employment policies, McColloch-Lussier said.

The group planned to introduce a shareholder resolution at Wal-Mart's annual meeting later this year calling on the company to expand the non-discrimination policy, but Pride Foundation was informed by a June 26 letter from Wal-Mart that the change was already made.

"We listened to everyone who contacted us and tried to make the best decision," Williams said.

The company did not comply with Pride Foundation's request to also add "gender identity," a category used to encompass transgendered people, to the non-discrimination statement.

"We added what we added," Williams said.

Ricky Bourdouvales, a male-to-female transgendered person, made headlines in April 2000 when she sued Wal-Mart in Middlesex Superior Court in New Jersey, alleging that the company fired her after learning of her gender identity.

In press reports at the time, Wal-Mart said she was fired for misconduct.

Judge Donald Hague entered a $2 million default judgment against Wal-Mart in July 2000 when the company failed to respond to the lawsuit, but vacated the judgement and ordered the case retried when Wal-Mart officials said they were not informed of the complaint against them. The outcome of the case was not known at press time.

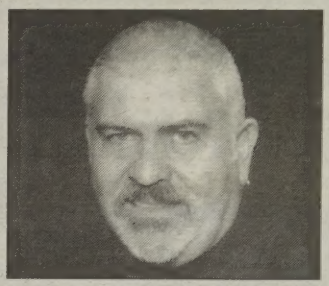
In July 1999, former Wal-Mart employee Tyger Dacosta filed a federal lawsuit claiming the company discriminated against him for being gay. Wal-Mart settled the lawsuit in March 2001, and it was dismissed pursuant to the agreement, according to records from the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California.

Williams did not respond to requests for comment on the two lawsuits by press time.

religion news

MCC founder plans to marry partner in Canadian church

LOS ANGELES — Rev. Troy Perry, who founded the nation's oldest predominantly gay church in 1968, plans to marry his partner Phillip Ray DeBlieck on July 16 in Toronto, according to the Los Angeles Times. Perry is credited with starting the Metropolitan Community Church in Los Angeles. The church has grown across the nation since then. "One of the desires of my heart is to legally marry him before I die," Perry said. "We've always said that to each other, and we finally have the chance to do it." Perry and DeBlieck can now legally marry because a Canadian court ruled that denying same-sex couples that opportunity was unconstitutional. The two plan to be married in a private ceremony at the Metropolitan Community Church in Toronto.



Rev. **Troy Perry**, the founder of the Metropolitan Community Church, plans to marry his partner Phillip Ray Deblieck on July 16 in Canada. (Photo courtesy the Metropolitan Community Church)

Gay Anglican pastor rejects appointment as bishop

LONDON (AP) — A gay clergy member whose appointment as a bishop divided the Anglican church decided not to take up his post, the Church of England said. The church's spiritual leader, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, said the decision by Rev. Jeffrey John should give Anglicans "pause for thought. This has been a time of open and painful confrontation, in which some of our bonds of mutual trust have been severely strained. We need now to give ourselves the proper opportunities honestly to think through what has happened and to find what God has been teaching us in these difficult days." John declined the post of bishop of Reading in a letter to Bishop of Oxford Richard Harries, who appointed him. John wrote he made the decision because of "the damage my consecration might cause to the unity of the church, including the Anglican Communion."

Baptism of gay couple's child splits Colo. church

DURANGO, Colo. (AP) — A dispute over the baptism of a lesbian couple's son divided a Lutheran church and prompted the departure of members on both sides of the issue. The conflict erupted last summer after Rev. Darin Johnson, associate pastor of Christ the King Lutheran Church in Durango, baptized the boy. Critics felt Johnson's reference to the couple as the boy's parents went beyond the church's stance on homosexuality. Some gay members of the church were upset by what they felt was a backlash. The couple reportedly broke up. About 60 members of the congregation left. A former church council president, a lesbian, called the dispute "a modern witch hunt." The 24-year area resident, who asked to remain nameless, said she is getting counseling to cope. "I was surprised at the intense feelings that I heard people express," said Dale Wingeleth, a church council member. "People were saying we should be judging homosexuals as sinners." Johnson said the church made strides over the past year. He said the church attracted about the same number of members it lost and offers classes on the church's position on homosexuality.

Mass. reverend lodges quiet protest over same-sex unions

WORCESTER, Mass. (AP) — Rev. Aaron R. Payson said he will continue to marry couples at the Universalist Church on Holden Street, but won't sign their marriage licenses as long as the state refuses to legally recognize same-sex marriages. "It's a matter of conscience for me," he told the Telegram & Gazette of Worcester. Payson said Monday that he will perform the religious marriage rite for heterosexual couples, but arrangements will be made for a justice of the peace or a judge to sign the legal document required by the state. Payson also performs Services of Holy Union in his congregation for gay and lesbian couples, and the ceremony is recorded by the church as if it were a marriage of a heterosexual couple. Same-sex couples also receive a holy union certificate similar to a marriage certificate given to heterosexual couples.

Gays in Hawaii protest exclusion from religious-oriented parade

HONOLULU (AP) — Gay groups may have been excluded from participating in a Christian-backed parade, but many of their members made their presence known from the sidelines as it moved through Waikiki July 5. Mayor Jeremy Harris and parade organizers were heckled as they passed by in the Family Day Parade. "Shame on you, Mayor Harris. Same on you for supporting homophobia and bigotry," Michael Golojuch called through a bullhorn as Harris rode by in the back of a convertible. Many of the protesters held signs. One said, "The Christian Right Is Wrong." Another sign read, "Christian Coalition: America's Taliban." "We hope to send a message to Mayor Harris and Garret Hashimoto (state chairman of the Hawaii Christian Coalition) that city-sponsored discrimination will not be accepted, we are going to hold them accountable, that this is a city-sponsored and city-endorsed parade," Golojuch said.

From staff and wire reports

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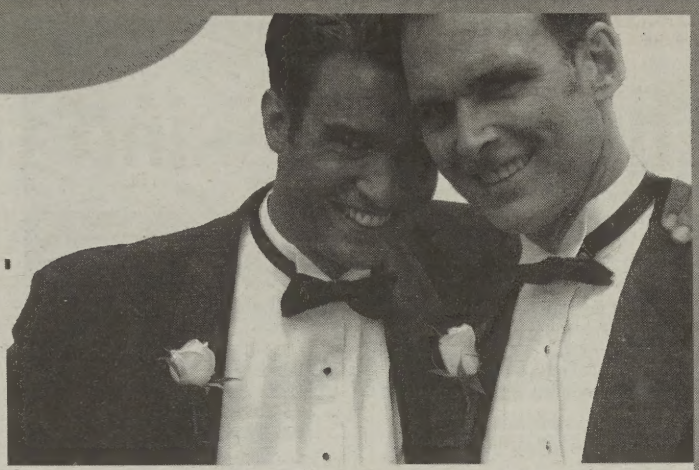

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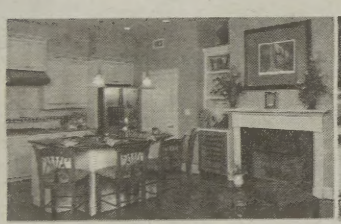

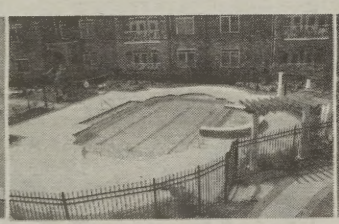

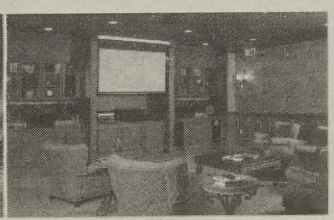

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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

The FACE behind the fight

Gay Fulton County employees brought personal struggles to DP benefits fight

By VAN GOWER

Gay Fulton County employees **Jean Bean** (left) and **Mary Louise Upshaw** formed a networking group that helped successfully lobby the Fulton County Board of Commissioners to enact domestic partnership benefits for county employees. (Photos by R.O. Youngblood)

As the Fulton County Board of Commissioners considered legislation to extend domestic partnership benefits to the county's gay employees, a group of employees came forward to make their faces known and their stories heard.

FACE, the Fulton Alliance of County Employees for GLBT Equality, formed a month before Commissioner Robb Pitts introduced domestic partnership legislation on April 16.

"We started meeting as a small group," said Jean Bean, arts and marketing coordinator for the county's Human Services Department. "We wanted to see how many gay and lesbian employees there were in Fulton County, and eventually we had a good, strong group."

As word spread, more county employees began to join, increasing membership to 16 by the third meeting and giving it a higher sense of purpose, Bean said.

In April, FACE began assembling in a meeting room in the Human Services building across the street from the main Fulton County government center. The discreet location protected the anonymity of county employees who wanted to participate but had anxieties about their employer finding out their sexual orientation.

But FACE was quickly spurred into political action. During its third meeting, members learned from Georgia Equality, a statewide gay advocacy group, that Pitts planned to introduce the domestic partnership legislation.

"Commissioner Pitts came on board, quietly and without any input from us and made a commitment to do it, put it together, and put it on the table without us having to do anything," said Mary Louise Upshaw, assistant director of the development division of Fulton County's Office of Environment & Community Development.

"It was icing on the cake of what we were already doing," Bean agreed. "But it threw us into the fray, and we had to mobilize quickly."

Working with Georgia Equality, FACE members testified in favor of the benefits at three County Commission meetings, hoping to convince commissioners of the legislation's importance to gay county employees.

"We had to take the bull by our own horns," Upshaw said. "We had to get out there and get Fulton County employees up front and put a human face on it."

FACE members shared their personal stories with the commissioners.

"My partner and I have been together 18 years, and I just wanted the same benefits that everyone else has," Bean said. "I don't want special benefits, just the same benefits."

Upshaw said FACE members "spoke with passion and from our hearts."

"It was that sharing of our experiences that ultimately made the difference," she said.

Georgia Equality Executive Director Allen Thornell agreed.

"FACE played a pivotal role in the success of the issue this time," Thornell said. "Primarily because they put a human face on the request. ...It made it hard for the commissioners to vote against their own people."

After three months of impassioned testimony, debate and delayed votes on the measure, the County Commission voted 4-2 on July 2 to approve domestic partner benefits for same-sex partners only. The measure takes effect on Jan. 1.

Commissioners Pitts, Nancy Boxill, Bill Edwards and Tom Lowe voted in favor of the measure. Emma Darnell and Commission Chair Mike Kenn opposed, and Bob Fulton was absent.

"Those who did not vote for it showed their true colors and their individual passions," Upshaw said. "That's perfectly OK as individuals, but when you become elected officials and you have employees who work for you, you have to put all that individual stuff aside."

Thornell agreed. "You can either be on the right side of history or the wrong side of history," he said.

Now that the benefits have won approval, FACE is looking for its next project, including the creation of a Web site.

"That was our number one topic," Bean said. "So we haven't really decided what we're going to do next. We're just reveling in this, and we'll have to regroup."

FACE and Georgia Equality plan a celebration on July 14 at Einstein's restaurant. The informal event is an opportunity to express gratitude to Fulton commissioners and other elected officials who supported the measure, including Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin and Atlanta City Council President Cathy Woolard.

MORE INFO

Fulton DP Celebration
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR, **Page 24** OCCASIONS, **Page 24** SPORTS, **Page 25**

notes

The public is invited to join U.S. Rep. **Denise Majette** (D-Ga.) as she tours the Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Center on Saturday, July 12 at 1 p.m., 170 11th St. 404-874-9890, www.aglc.org

SUNDAY JULY 13

KID POWER: Lisa Prince, co-founder of Atlanta Family Pride, leads an evening of fun, games and empowerment for **children of gay parents** at 6 p.m. at Charis Books & More, 1189 Euclid Ave. 404-522-9912, www.chariscircle.org

TUESDAY JULY 15

AIDS AWARENESS: A free **lunch and information** session with nurse Tara Strawbridge about the metabolic changes in people with HIV takes place from noon to 1:30 p.m. at AIDS Survival Project, 139 Ralph McGill Blvd., 3rd Floor. 404-874-7926, www.aidssurvivalproject.org

WEDNESDAY JULY 16

ROLLER DISCO: Kick up your wheels at the **roller skating fund-raiser** for AIDS Survival Project from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at All American Skating Center, 5400 Bermuda Road, Stone Mountain. 404-874-7926, www.aidssurvivalproject.org

THURSDAY JULY 17

BUBBA BINGO: Drag fund-raiser Bubba D. Licious hosts the monthly **PALS Bingo** benefiting Pets Are Loving Support, a group that helps people with HIV and AIDS care for their pets. Doors open at 6:45 p.m. at Ramada Inn & Conference Center, 418 Armour Drive. 404-876-7257, www.palsatlanta.org

SATURDAY JULY 19

DIVE IN: Lesbian networking group Fourth Tuesday hosts a **pool party** and karaoke where members invite friends who may want to join. 770-662-4353, www.fourthtuesday.org

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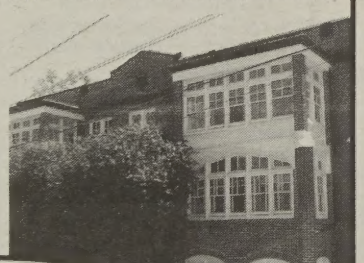

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community calendar

SATURDAY JULY 12

COUNSELING TRAINING. Learn basic skills and referral techniques to become an HIV/AIDS peer counselor at a free workshop from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at AIDS Survival Project, 139 Ralph McGill Blvd. 404-874-7926, www.aidssurvivalproject.org

GEORGIA LOG CABIN REPUBLICANS. Members and nonmembers are invited to a summer social starting at 3 p.m. For more info: 404-966-9181, www.lcrga.com/events.html

ONGOING EVENTS

GLBT TEEN GROUP. 2 p.m. Presbyterian student center. Athens, GA. 706-546-4611 or stock@negia.net

LAMBDA GROUP. Family beyond the northern perimeter, with potluck dinner. 7 p.m. 770-457-5264, lambdagroup@msn.com

MIDTOWN ARTISTS MARKET. 10 am-4 p.m. Midtown Promenade, 931 Monroe Drive. 770-913-3978

NORTH ATLANTA OWLS. Older wiser lesbians (50+) meet for fun and friendship. Locations and activities vary. Mfinatlanta@yahoo.com

NORTHLAKE ALLIANCE OF GAYS/LESBIANS & STRAIGHTS. Monthly potluck dinner at 7 p.m. Rotating locations, contact for info. 404-327-9633, www.geocities.com/nagsatlanta

SUNDAY JULY 13

CHARIS CIRCLE. An evening of fun, games, info, and empowerment for children, ages 7-16, of LGBT parents at 6 p.m. at Charis Books and More, 1189 Euclid Ave. NE. 404-522-9912, www.chariscircle.org

HIV BENEFIT. D'zire Hair Products previews hairstyles by Atlanta's top designers at a cocktail party benefit for African American women with HIV and AIDS, from 4 – 8 p.m. at Red Chair, 550-C Amsterdam Ave. 404-874-4266 for info.

ONGOING EVENTS

AIDS SURVIVAL PROJECT. 20 percent of food sales at Tijuana Garage from 4-11 p.m. go to AIDS Survival Project. Through July 27. Tijuana Garage, 353 Moreland Ave. 404-874-7926, x16, www.aidssurvivalproject.org

ATLANTA FEMINIST WOMEN'S CHORUS. Non-auditioned. Celebrating strength & diversity in women through music. 3:45 rehearsal. Druid Hills Presbyterian Church. 770-438-5823 or AFWChorus@yahoo.com

BLACK LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP. 4-6 p.m. Coming out support group. YouthPride Center, 302 E. Howard Ave. Decatur, 404-370-0920

CHARIS CIRCLE. Gaia Collective, a women's circle of sharing & discussion for all ages. Bring a potluck dish. 6 p.m. Charis Books And More, 1189 Euclid Ave. NE. 404-524-0304, www.chariscircle.org

COME OUT DANCING, ATLANTA. 2 p.m. Partner dance lessons at UUCA Social Hall, 1911 Cliff Valley Way NE. Swing and Foxtrot, $10 per hour. Contact Shirley Adams for information, 404-876-3950 or comeoutdancing@mindspring.com

LAMBDA GROUP. Family beyond the northern perimeter, and dining-out. Time varies. 770-457-5264, lambdagroup@msn.com

MONDAY JULY 14

ONGOING EVENTS

HOTLANTA SQUARES. Beginner classes in high-energy square dancing. No dress code, no pressure, and no dance partner or experience necessary. 7-10 p.m. Meet at First MCC Church of Atlanta, 1379 Tullie Road. www.iagsdc.org/hotlanta, hotlantasquares@aol.com

LAMBDA ALLIANCE. 7 p.m. UGA's LGBT student organization. Room 142 of Tate Student Center. Athens, GA. 706-583-8297 or www.uga.edu/lambda

TUESDAY JULY 15

ATLANTA MEN FOR ALL CULTURES. Gay men from all walks of life meet for dinner at 7:30 p.m. at Mom & Pop's Midtown, 1935 Piedmont Circle NE. For map and info log on to www.AtlMenforAllCultures.org

WOMEN EXECUTIVES BREAKFAST. "Business to Business" magazine presents its Women's Leadership Executive Breakfast from 7:30 – 9 a.m. at Maggiano's Buckhead, 3368 Peachtree Road. 404-237-5041, www.btobmagazine.com

ONGOING EVENTS

CHARIS CIRCLE. Weekly meeting of high school age women writers. 5-6:30 p.m. Charis Books And More, 1189 Euclid Ave. NE. 404-524-0304, www.chariscircle.org

To add a listing, e-mail **calendar@sovo.com**, call 404-876-1819, ext. 32, or fax to 404-876-2709, attn: Van Gower. Entries should be submitted at least 14 days in advance.

GEORGIA DYKES ON BIKES. 7 p.m. No rules. No drama, Freedom to be. Cowtippers, GeorgiaDOB@aol.com or www.georgia.dykesonbikes.org

RAINBOW CENTER MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP. 12:15-1:30 p.m. Gay or bisexual men. www.therainbowcenter.org or 404-885-9776

RAINBOW GRINGOS. Gringo's Mexican Cantina donates 20 percent of sales to CHRIS Rainbow Home. Every Tuesday.1238 DeKalb Ave. 404-522-8666

WEDNESDAY JULY 16

DISCO ROLLERSKATING & DANCE PARTY. Have a disco great time while raising funds for AIDS Survival Project from 7:30-10:30 p.m. at All American Skating Center, 5400 Bermuda Road, Stone Mountain. 404-874-7926, www.aidssurvivalproject.org

ONGOING EVENTS

OUR SONG 7:15– 9:15 p.m. Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Chorus. Rehearsal, First Existentialist Congregation Church, 470 Candler Park Drive. 404-222-0443, oursongatlanta@aol.com

RAINBOW CENTER WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP. 7:30-8:30 p.m. For lesbians, bisexual, and questioning women. www.therainbowcenter.org or 404-885-9776

TEEN GROUP. GLBTQ's ages 13-17. 6:30-8 p.m. YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road, Decatur. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

YOUNG ADULT GROUP. GLBTQ's ages 18-24. 6:30-8 p.m. YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road, Decatur. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

THURSDAY JULY 17

CHARIS CIRCLE. ZAMI co-sponsors "Feminism 101: Substance Abuse and Recovery in Lesbian Women of Color Communities" at 7:30 p.m. at Charis Books and More, 1189 Euclid Ave. NE. 404-522-9912, www.chariscircle.org

P.A.L.S. BINGO. Camp-drag queen Bubba D. Licious hosts the monthly fundraiser bingo night benefiting Pets Are Loving Support. Doors open 6:30 p.m., first number is called at 7:45 p.m. at Ramada Inn & Conference Center, 418 Armour Drive. 404-876-7257, www.palsatlanta.org, www.bubbadlicious.net

ONGOING EVENTS

ATLANTA GAY MEN'S CHORUS. Rehearsals 7 p.m. First Metropolitan Community Church, 1379 Tullie Road. 404-320-1030 or www.agmchorus.org

BOYTALK. GLBTQ's ages18-24. 6:30-8 p.m. YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

COME OUT DANCING, ATLANTA. 7 p.m. Partner dance lessons at UUCA Social Hall, 1911 Cliff Valley Way NE. Swing and Foxtrot, $10 per hour. Contact Shirley Adams for information, 404-876-3950 or comeoutdancing@mindspring.com

GET YOUR LIFE. 12-4 p.m. For young black gay and bisexual men. Georgia State, Dorchester Room. 44 Courtland St. 404-870-7746, deeperlove@aidatlanta.org

LAGENDER INC. 6-7:30 p.m. Transgender/Transsexual support group in collaboration with Aniz Inc. 223 Mitchell St., Suite 200. 404-767-5644

LATINO GROUP. GLBTQ's of all ages. 6:30-8 p.m. YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

LESBIAN READING GROUP. 404-467-4278

WOMYN'S GROUP. GLBTQ's ages 18-24. 6:30-8 p.m. YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

FRIDAY JULY 18

CHARIS CIRCLE. All-women open mike night. Sign-up from 7:30-8 p.m. with performances starting at 8 p.m. at Charis Books and More, 1189 Euclid Ave. NE. 404-522-9912, www.chariscircle.org

WOMEN'S HAPPY HOUR. Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative welcomes women for drinks, food, and good friends at 6:30 p.m., at Spiced Dog, 2899-C North Decatur Road, Decatur. 404-688-2524, www.alci.org

occasions

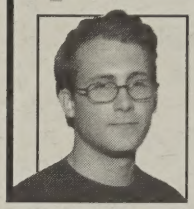
BIRTHDAYS

Happy birthday to Georgia Equality board member Charlie Frew on July 11. "You're the best!"

Happy birthday to Black & White Men Together Atlanta members Cory M. and Walter G. on July 15.

Happy birthday to David A. Moore, former Southern Voice arts editor, on July 16.

sports CHRISTOPHER SEELY



Hotlanta Softball League finishes regular season; play-offs to decide teams for world championships.

Softball preps for world series

HOTLANTA SOFTBALL LEAGUE CLOSES its regular season play July 13, with make-up games to determine division champions that automatically earn berths to the gay world series next month.

But teams that fail to take the open and women's divisions titles will have a shot at making the world series cut July 19-20 in HSL's playoff tournament at the Metro Atlanta Softball Complex, home to HSL's regular season games.

HSL's open division splits into four divisions based on skill level — A, B, C and D — and the league can send every A division team in the league, two B and C division teams, and one D division team to the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance's world series in Washington, D.C., set for Aug. 16-23.

This year, the highest skilled A division has two teams that are eligible to attend the world series — the Atlanta Venom and the Atlanta Power.

Since only one D division team gets a berth in the world series, the final game of the regular season between the Stingrays and the Wackers decides which team advances, making it one of the more exciting games to watch this Sunday, according to Mike Miracle, coach of the C division Packers.

The D division Stingrays and Wackers have a tied record going into this weekend.

In the C division, the Packers are a shoe in, predicts Scott Hyche, a coach for the B division Brewers.

But nothing is certain until regular season play ends, Miracle said.

"What it boils down to is the Packers and the Comets," Miracle said.

And the Sharks and the Pounders both have a shot of winning the C division tournament to capture the second berth, Miracle said. Whichever team wins the playoff tournament gets the berth, regardless of regular season standings, according to HSL rules.

The Bulldogs already won the B division berth as regular season champs because they cannot be mathematically eliminated in this weekend's games, Hyche said.

But the B division tournament should also be a heated match to watch with two teams vying for the title that have proven to be good tournament teams this year, he said.

"We're a dangerous tournament team," Hyche said of the Brewers. "We'll whip you in a tournament."

The Brewers beat out both the Bulldogs and the JTL Diggers, another Hotlanta B division team, in a Birmingham tournament Easter weekend. The Diggers finished second in Birmingham, but at the Hotlanta Sports Classic over Memorial Day Weekend, the Diggers and the Brewers swapped places, taking first and second, respectively.

Hotlanta Softball League closes its regular season play on Sunday with automatic berths to the gay world series next month up for grabs. (File photo)

THIS YEAR THE RANKINGS IN WOMEN'S competitive division are not as clear cut as they have been in years past, according to Sybil Smith, women's rules chair for HSL.

"On any given day, any team can beat any other," Smith said.

HSL's women's division splits into two recreational divisions, an alternative division, and a competitive division, and NAGAAA regulations allow HSL to send four teams to play competitively in the world series.

The teams most likely to advance to the world series are RipTide, Force, Gamma and Dramanotz, Smith said.

Those four teams all play in HSL's competitive division, but one team would have to downgrade to the alternative division in the world series to be eligible to go because only three teams are allowed to represent HSL in the competitive division at the world series, Smith said.

MORE INFO

HSL Final Regular Season Games
July 13, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

HSL Playoff Tournament
July 19-20, Times TBA

All Games played at:
Metro Atlanta Softball Complex
7301 Cambellton Road

sports calendar

THIS WEEK

WILDERNESS NETWORK OF GEORGIA. 4th annual Campout and New Member Welcome July 18-20 at Red Top Mountain State Park Pioneer Campground on Lake Allatoona, 50 Lodge Road, Cartersville. For info, log on to www.wildnetga.org

BASKETBALL

HOTLANTA BASKETBALL. Saturdays, Men at 11:30 am, women at 2 pm. New association, all skill levels welcome. Atlbasketball@aol.com

ZAMI BASKETBALL. African-American hoopers, 18 and older. Saturdays, 3 pm. First Decatur Baptist Church, 308 Clairmont Ave. 404-370-0920, www.zami.org

BILLIARDS

RAINBOW DIVISION ATLANTA POOL LEAGUES. Amateur pool teams, all skill levels wanted. Contact Anita at 770-552-1180, www.APA-Atlanta.com

BOWLING

BOWLING LEAGUE. For single lesbians and gay men. Mondays 9 pm. AMF Savannah Lanes, 115 Tibet Avenue. $10/week. Trey or Trish, 912-925-0320

FRIENDS & COMPANY. Sundays 6 pm. AMF Victory Lanes, 2055 E. Victory Drive, Savannah. 912-354-0658

HOCKEY

GEORGIA FIELD HOCKEY ASSOCIATION WOMEN'S LEAGUE. All skill levels welcome. Saturdays, 9 am-noon. Contact Nori, 770-985-4903, www.gfha.org/womensleague.html

RUGBY

ATLANTA WOMEN'S RUGBY. Practice Thursdays 7-9 pm. Matches on Saturdays, no experience necessary. www.atlantaheatwrfc.com

HOTLANTA RUGBY. New rugby forming. For info log on to www.hotlantarugby.org

RUNNING/WALKING/HIKING

FRONT RUNNERS. Saturdays meet at 8 a.m. in parking lot behind Piedmont Park tennis courts. Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., meet at the CVS shopping center at the northwest corner of Commerce Drive and Ponce De Leon, Decatur. Wednesdays 6:30 p.m., meet at parking lot behind Piedmont Park tennis courts. 770-621-5007

SOCCER

HOTLANTA SOCCER ASSOCIATION. Practices Thursdays 6-8 p.m. and Saturdays 3-5 p.m. at Inman Middle School, 774 Virginia Ave. NE. 404-299-8245, www.hotlantasoccer.com

SOFTBALL

HOTLANTA SOFTBALL LEAGUE. For information, call 404-875-9881, or visit www.hotlantasoftball.org.

SWIMMING

ATLANTA RAINBOW TROUT. Swim practice: Tuesdays 8:30 pm., Thursdays 8:30 pm. Water polo/swim practice: Fridays 7:30 pm., Sundays11 am. Georgia Tech Aquatic Center. 404-412-7777, www.atlantarainbowtrout.com

TENNIS

ATLANTA TEAM TENNIS ASSOCIATION OPEN PLAY. Social tennis for players at all levels. Saturdays 2-6 pm. at Piedmont Park tennis courts, and at Glenlake Tennis Center in Decatur. 770-621-2699, www.atta.org

VOLLEYBALL

HOTLANTA VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION. Open play for all levels. Tuesdays 7-10 pm., Friday evenings. 770-621-5062, www.hotlantavolleyball.org

To add a listing, e-mail **calendar@sovo.com**, call 404-876-1819, ext. 32, or fax to 404-876-2709, attn: Van Gower. Entries should be submitted at least 14 days in advance.

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TO SUBMIT A LETTER OR COMMENTARY: Letters should be fewer than 400 words; commentaries should be fewer than 750 words. Submissions may be edited for content and length, and must include a name, address and phone number for verification. Send submissions by by fax to 404-876-2709 or by regular mail to the Southern Voice office, attn: Letters/Commentary.

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guest editorial

Why we won and will win

Five justices struck down sodomy laws because they learned our relationships were about **more than sex**. To win on **marriage** and the **military**, we must come out.

By CHAI R. FELDBLUM

IN HIS DISSENT IN LAWRENCE v. Texas, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia informed us that the homosexual agenda is "directed at eliminating the moral opprobrium that has traditionally attached to homosexual conduct."

Well, that should come as no surprise. I believe homosexuality is as morally neutral as heterosexuality and, moreover, I believe gay love embodies the same moral goods as heterosexual love. My agenda would be for the rest of the country to believe those things as well.

But Justice Scalia is wrong when he asserts the majority's decision in the Texas sodomy case is not "mainstream" and is the product of a court captivated by a "law-profession culture that has largely signed on to the so-called homosexual agenda." To the contrary, if we are to believe Gallup poll results, the majority opinion in Lawrence reflects the current moral assessments of the majority of the American public.

Whenever a court decides a "liberty" question under the Constitution, it is forced to make a value judgment about the import and worth of a particular relationship or activity. That is because the Constitution only protects our liberty interests from being taken away without "due process" of law. In most cases, a hearing will suffice for that.

It is the Supreme Court that, many years ago, imbued the "due process clause" with additional power when the government tries to take away an interest that is "essential to the concept of ordered liberty" or "central to the dignity and autonomy" of an individual. Once the Court created this category of "substantive due process" rights, it was forced to make value judgments as to which relationships and activities would fall into this category.

IN 1986, FIVE JUSTICES MADE A value judgment about the import and worth of gay sexual relationships. They decided such relationships have no connection to marriage, procreation and childrearing — the type of relationships and activities the Court had previously concluded were "central to the dignity and autonomy" of an individual. And they concluded there was no way to distinguish gay sexual activity from other consensual sexual activity, such as incest, prostitution or adultery, and they did not want to "go down that road."

In 2003, five justices made different value judgments. They decided relationships experienced by gay couples (including the sex engaged in by such couples) shared many of the qualities experienced by heterosexual couples. They concluded such relationships involved intimate and personal choices that were "central to the personal dignity and autonomy" of such individuals. And given that understanding of gay sexual relationships, it was not hard for those five justices to distinguish gay sexual relationships from bestiality or prostitution.

In making these value judgments, the Lawrence majority was neither ahead nor behind the public. And that is not because the mainstream is captivated by, what Justice Scalia would call, the "law profession's anti-anti-homosexual culture." Rather, it is simply because most people in America have gotten to know gay people and gay couples.

When your child is in the same kindergarten class as the child with two moms or two dads, it is hard to maintain the belief that the sex between those moms and dads has more in common with prostitution or bestiality than it does with the sex you and most other couples are having.

The fact that the majority in Lawrence mirrors current public moral views is also why social conservatives have little to fear that lap dancing or bestiality will suddenly become immune to state regulation. It is quite unlikely that a majority of the Supreme Court would ever conclude that such activities are central to an individual's "personal dignity and autonomy."

BUT SINCE THE MAJORITY IN Lawrence mirrors current public moral views, gay advocates cannot be complacent that this decision will inevitably herald entry into marriage or the military. The court took pains to note that gay personal relationships may not be "entitled to formal recognition in the law," because a state may set boundaries to protect against "abuse of an institution."

How exactly does an institution become abused? Obviously, the court wants to leave itself the leeway to announce, at some later date, that the institutions of marriage or the military could not withstand the influx of openly gay couples or individuals.

I believe the courts of this land, including the Supreme Court, will ultimately rule that marriage and the military cannot constitutionally be foreclosed to gay individuals and couples. But for that to happen, the public moral assessment of gay people needs to change yet further.

According to the latest Gallup poll, a bare majority (54 percent) of the population believes homosexuality is an "acceptable" lifestyle. That number needs to increase to equal the substantial majority (63 percent) that currently believes homosexual sex should not be criminalized.

Thankfully, Justice Scalia has pointed the way to this outcome by clearly articulating the gay agenda. And, unlike many agendas, this one requires no meetings or central coordination. All it requires is that those of us who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered continue to live lives of honesty, openness and integrity.

The agenda would also receive a boost if we instituted a "Families Coming Out Day." The day before Thanksgiving, every family that knows one of its members is gay should "come out" to another family about that fact. My guess is that the number of people who "know" a gay person would double each Thanksgiving.

Homosexual conduct never deserved the moral opprobrium that attached to it. The more we reduce the social disapproval, the closer we will come to a point when the exclusion of gay people from the military and from marriage will seem truly ludicrous.

Chai R. Feldblum is a longtime gay rights advocate and is professor of law and director of the Federal Legislation Clinic at the Georgetown University Law Center. She can be reached at **feldblum@law.georgetown.edu**.

letters

Justice Kennedy: Apology accepted

To the Editor:

I hope I can cry some tears of joy about the Supreme Court decision (news, June 27). This justice feels too good to be true.

I feel as though I have been a victim of a not-so-subtle terrorist campaign most of my life. It began when I was 19 and wanted to come out to my parents. I was waking up from a nap, and I overheard my brother talking with my mom about how he thought gays were going to hell.

I did come out because I couldn't stand keeping secrets from my family, and they turned on me in their own ways as well.

Thank God my brother is a less dogmatic believer, and my family has come to accept me just like I am, and I them.

At 42, the rhetoric from religious radicals and the politicians who are their bedfellows has worn me down, though I have tried mightily not to internalize their beliefs.

Justice Anthony M. Kennedy: Apology accepted.

America: stop eating your young.

ANGELA MOTTER
Atlanta

Another perfect Pride

To the Editor:

Another perfect Pride!

The Supreme Court decision could have never come at a better time with this year's Atlanta Pride theme, "Freedom to be."

I want to thank the entire medical team I worked with this year and especially Dr. Travis Roth. Atlanta Pride is always successful, and I was proud to be a part of it!

JOHN BAGWELL
Atlanta

First slavery, now sodomy

To the Editor:

The Supreme Court ruling in Lawrence vs. Texas is creating a storm of anger among those who feel the court has inserted itself into "states' rights." Some have already claimed the court has taken side in "the culture wars" by preventing the state of Texas and other states from arresting "sodomites."

The Supreme Court did not either endorse or condemn any lifestyle or sexual orientation. It simply ruled that police, courts and other agents of government have no right to invade people's homes to arrest them for private acts among consenting adults.

The same legislative and police power that Texas used to arrest two gay men has been used to enforce human slavery, discriminatory "Jim Crow" laws, sterilization of the mentally retarded, and sex between unmarried couples, or lovemaking between husband and wife that wasn't the "missionary position."

It has been said that "constant vigilance is the price of liberty." We should respect and vigorously defend the rights of others, regardless of whether we personally agree with their choices, or we could all lose our freedoms. There should be "liberty and justice for all."

GARY JAMES MINTER
Raleigh, N.C.

No link between gays and fringe

To the Editor:

Oh God, here we go again.

In response to W. Brandon Lacy Campos' letter ("Greens push Pride against Iraq war," June 27), I submit to you another attempt to pull our community into another "radical" fringe movement. This movement is against military involvement by the U.S. and our allies in Iraq and other places around the globe to fight terror, crimes against humanity and dictators.

The ideology of this group would be passive rather than aggressive military behavior.

I am gay. I am Republican and I am a Christian; yes, all in one. With that said, I get so damn tired of every fringe movement trying to align themselves with the gay community in hopes of furthering a cause, defined as justified.

I am also pro-USA, pro-peace, pro-pre-emptive military activity and pro-gay. I don't need to be told how to think or what I should think because I am gay. I get rather insulted at the bombardment of rhetoric from every corner as to what I should do, think or believe.

I hear friends complaining about conservatives, but they never mention the cookie-cutter mentality of the left or these hysterical fringe groups. Just because someone is gay doesn't mean he or she falls into every gay stereotypical category known to man.

We have tried for years to be treated with decency and respect and to make rational and sound decisions based on intellect, not on the outlandish causes of a few. The last thing we need is another "radical" fringe group attached at our hip.

JACK HARDMAN
Atlanta

'THE MOSTLY UNFABULOUS SOCIAL LIFE OF ETHAN GREEN,' PAGE 58

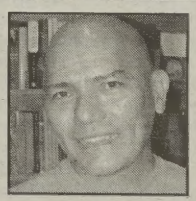
THE Q

Questions about what's going on in your world

Interviews and photos by Christopher Seely

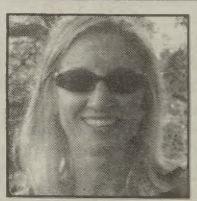
Wal-Mart, the nation's largest private employer with more than 1 million people, recently revised its workplace anti-discrimination policy to include gay employees.

Do you consider a company's non-discrimination policies and whether it offers domestic partner benefits when you decide where to shop? Would you stop shopping someplace if you found out that they had anti-gay or non-inclusive employment policies?



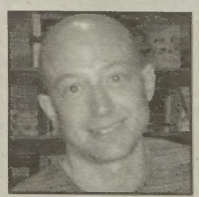
'Nowadays in the new millennium, you have to be open minded, and I think everybody has to be. ... But I don't think I will stop shopping at places with bad policies, because there are probably some things that I like in the shops.'

Carlo Estrada, 40, Winnipeg, Canada



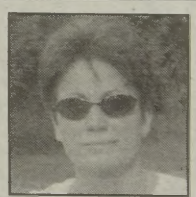
'If I knew a certain company discriminated, I would probably go out of my way to avoid shopping there. However, I generally am not very aware of most of the stores where I shop, what their policy is. I just have no tolerance for any kind of discrimination. If I knew a company didn't hire gays, or mistreated gays, or go out of their way not to support gay rights, that would be a turn off.'

Ginger Devoe, 38, Midtown



'I wouldn't exclusively look for places that have supportive policies, but I certainly would make an effort to patronize them if they served my needs. There are enough alternatives, though, that I don't need to support an organization that is not supportive of who I am as a person.'

Tim Diehl, 35, Fairfield County, Conn.

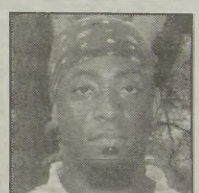


'I noticed at Pride which companies supported Pride, and I would be more inclined to shop with them, to fly Delta or drink Coke products or something like that. I wouldn't shop at places with bad policies because I feel like I'd be hurting myself. It would be something that I certainly don't stand for, and I'm not a part of, so I certainly wouldn't support their business.'

June Bishop, 46, Pike County, Ga.

'I should support people that support my community, and I'm supporting myself in that way too. If I have any problems, I think I would go to the places that are gay-friendly.'

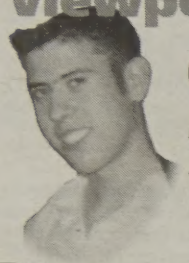
Sandy Beach, 49, Midtown



'I like thrift store shopping a lot, and normally those places don't have any issues like that. Where I shop it is not necessitated to have those kinds of policies. I don't think anybody needs to be discriminated against, though. So if it happened, that would definitely influence my decision to shop there.'

Ben Johnson, 27, Buckhead

viewpoint JAMES KIRCHICK



Gay Pride parades make homophobia easy. After watching one, who can blame straights for thinking we are sex-crazed perverts?

Parading gay shame

WE NEED TO REVISIT WHETHER Gay Pride parades are properly representing us to the rest of the world. Whether we like it or not, our image is inextricably tied to these parades, but unfortunately, they are characterized by excessive, in-your-face sexuality and the unabashed display of sexual fetishes and other fringes of homosexual "culture."

Some will no doubt call me a fascist, self-loathing homosexual for criticizing the historic presence of these groups in our Pride parades, and allege that I am an intolerant louse who is all too representative of the upper-middle class, white-male dominated world of gay media and affairs.

Yet while the names will surely fly — and if there is anything the "gay left" is good at today, it's name-calling — it's still an important viewpoint.

This year's New York City Pride parade was the first Gay Pride march I ever attended, but I knew what to expect. My parents and grandparents were in the city for the weekend, and I was adamant that they leave town before noon on Sunday, the start of the parade. By no means are they homophobes — far from it. But I was humiliated by what they would see.

The parade was a self-defeating spectacle, a strategic mistake for a gay rights movement. Finally we have real momentum, and what do we do with it? We hold up signs for the world to see that say, "HONK IF YOU LIKE ORAL SEX!"

I did not expect myself to be nodding my head in even half-agreement with the right-wing Catholic protester standing by Rockefeller Center saying prayers over his rosary beads. A "carnival of perversion," he labeled the event.

THE AGENDA OF "LEATHERPEOPLE," S&M sadists and other sexual fetishists is not my agenda. And while they may be half-amusing when I am mildly intoxicated, I feel no communal connection with drag queens.

Of course, these people have every right to fulfill and even display to the world what it is that exactly gets them off, but to associate these particular proclivities with the rest of the gay community is ridiculous. As your average gay man living in America today, I have as much in common with an 80-year-old transvestite as I do with Jerry Falwell.

I greatly admire Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) for jogging back and forth along Fifth Avenue declaring, "Let's hear it for the Supreme Court!" through a bullhorn. But it was mildly depressing to turn my head seconds later and see a collection of nearly naked men prancing around not far behind him.

It's like inviting your best friend over for Thanksgiving dinner and having to introduce him to your rowdy and disheveled brother-in-law.

Gay Pride parades make homophobia easy. After watching one, who can blame straight people for thinking gay men are nothing more than sex-crazed perverts? Today's Gay Pride parades fulfill prejudicial stereotypes every bit as much as a Jewish parade with a bunch of miserly merchants, or an African-American parade with a float of black men eating watermelon.

THOSE ON THE "GAY LEFT" WHO embrace the distasteful underbelly of the gay rights movement will say that I am a hypocrite, demanding rights for myself while denying them for others. But never would I advocate overt legal discrimination against those on the fringe, I simply do not want to be associated with them.

Homosexuality has lasted throughout human history; it is an undeniable and significant aspect of our very human condition and is deserving of legitimization. Dressing up as a woman in 6-inch stilettos with a purple wig is not.

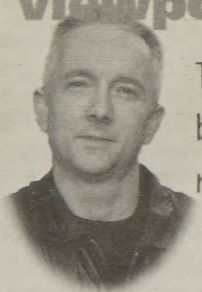
Do not get me wrong. I enjoy seeing young men dancing in boxer briefs as much as the next gay guy. But there is a time and a place, and it certainly doesn't have to happen in public.

There is simply more to being gay than simple sexual desire. We can demand full equality far more effectively if the mainstay of our marches is our genuine love for one another, not just gluteus muscles.

We would be wise to remember the words of Larry Kramer, who has described gay male indifference by asking, "How can they value life so little and cocks and asses so much?"

James Kirchick is a sophomore at Yale University and a columnist for the Yale Daily News; he can be reached at **james.kirchick@yale.edu**.

viewpoint ROGER N. LANCASTER



The Supreme Court threw out sodomy laws but the government is still fully engaged in regulating **sex lives**, and gays are the victims.

Post-sodomy sex panics

RICHARD ROSENDALL'S COLUMN, "Let's admit we're winning" (op-ed, July 4) properly celebrates the Supreme Court's decision in Lawrence v. Texas. But it's premature to declare a victory in the culture wars. "We" gays are not necessarily winning battles on every front.

Item: When former President Clinton attempted to lift the ban on gays in the armed forces, what we got instead was "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," and an upsurge in anti-gay witch-hunts and expulsions in the military.

Item: The 1996 Welfare Reform Act provided funds for abstinence-only education — not for sex, safe-sex, or contraceptive education. To date, chastity indoctrination remains the *only* federally funded form of sex education, with heterosexual marriage depicted as the *only* condition under which two people might properly have sex.

Item: The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), drafted during a period of major advances for gay rights, remains on the books. If Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) has his way, it might even become an amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Item: Bush's judicial appointments spell trouble for future legal battles over gay rights, reproductive rights and sexual freedom in general. Bush has placed a number of deeply conservative judges — many of them associated with the religious right — in federal courts across the land. One or two new appointments to the Supreme Court would be sufficient to overturn Lawrence v. Texas, Roe v. Wade and other important decisions on sexual freedom and privacy.

AS IF THAT WEREN'T ENOUGH, GAYS remain extremely vulnerable to false accusation, malicious prosecution, and other forms of legal harassment.

Item: There is no doubt that Catholic Church officials covered up very serious cases of sex abuse over many years. But the pedophile priest scandal has become a major legal industry, with trial lawyers extracting large settlements from the Catholic Church's deep pockets. According to a recent report in Forbes magazine, the ongoing panic is already spilling over into other venues, like public schools. Gays who work with children face a real and growing risk of false accusation.

Item: Immediately following the Lawrence decision, the Supreme Court set aside Matthew R. Limon's lengthy prison sentence on statutory rape charges. Limon, who was barely 18, had engaged in consensual oral sex with another male, who was nearly 15. Both teens were living in an educational institution for developmentally disturbed youth.

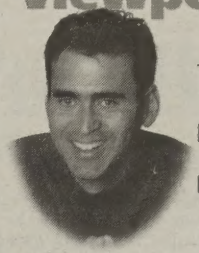
Limon received a 17-year prison sentence. Under Kansas law's "Romeo and Juliet" provision, the most he could have received for engaging in oral sex with a 14-year old girl would have been 15 months. The Supreme Court rightly sent the case back to Kansas, presumably disallowing such discrepancies under the Equal Protection Clause.

The court's ruling in the Limon case is indeed yet more cause for celebration. But against the current backdrop of ongoing sex panics, states like Kansas might logically respond to such rulings by striking "Romeo and Juliet" provisions and enhancing penalties across the board.

So let's celebrate a major, important victory, but let's also get it right: Every advance in gay rights has been shadowed by anti-gay crusades and social backlash. We've made important, possibly irreversible advances on some fronts, but we are also living through ongoing sex panics on other fronts.

Roger N. Lancaster is an anthrolopogy and cultural studies professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., and the author of "The Trouble with Nature: Sex in Science and Popular Culture" (California, 2003). He can be reached at **rlancast@gmu.edu**.

viewpoint MICHAEL ALVEAR



Two things **gay men never say**: 'Look at the morals on that stud.' And, 'I'd really like to open up emotionally. He seems like a good listener.'

Sex and love and gay men

THE DEWEY DECIMAL SYSTEM CAN'T compartmentalize love and sex the way men can.

I'm the perfect example. I always seem to be stuck screwing guys I don't want to date, and dating the guys I don't want to screw.

Like this guy I met playing volleyball. We went up to block a shot, and we both fell down. We had a "Love Boat" moment when I grabbed his hand to help him up. There were wedding platters in his eyes. There were penises in mine.

So we go on a date. Or rather, he went on a date. I went on a hunt. After dinner, we relaxed on my couch. My hands, looking for warmer weather, migrated south.

"I don't do that on the first date," he said, putting my hands back where they belonged.

"How about on your last?" I asked, putting my hands back where they didn't belong.

I was kidding. Sort of. I couldn't help myself. The guy was my type the way the arial font is New Yorker magazine's type: Easy on the eyes, making you want to finger the whole thing till you get to the end.

Our dating rules didn't match. His was basically "Three Dates and You're In." Mine was basically, "Three Dates and You're Out."

I was so unfair to him, but once your inner pig comes out, it's hard to coax it back in.

"Let's do something, dinner, a movie," he'd say.

"I can't really do anything until 11 o'clock," I'd tell him.

"Well, you can't do anything at 11 o'clock at night on a weekday except have sex and go to sleep," he'd say.

"Exactly," I'd say to myself.

And so, whenever he asked me out he'd hear a knock on his door around 11.

The truth was that I didn't really want to have dinner or do romantic things with this guy. I was obsessed with his body, not his mind.

THEN THERE'S THE OTHER SIDE: the guys you want to date but not screw. They're the worst. Because they make you realize what a nutcase you are.

Like this guy, "Ted." I loved everything about this guy except his body. I tried to do the chick thing. You know, screw a guy even though you're not physically attracted to them because they're kind and smart and loving and that's what you want in your life so what's a few minutes of terror.

Well it didn't take. I tried but I just couldn't do it. I even invoked the "Three Date Rule" to buy myself some time, to let my emotional attraction translate into a sexual attraction.

We did have sex once, but only once. I don't know how women do it, but if I'm not attracted to a guy physically, I can't have sex with them no matter how attracted I am to them emotionally.

I'm not the only one. Most gay men I know are like that, too. That's probably a major reason so many of us are so single for so long. If we could direct our sexual desire from physical asses to emotional assets we'd lead more fulfilled lives.

BUT HOW DO WE DO IT? ARE THERE bio-psychologists out there who can rewire us? I doubt it. Not without going through a lot of blown fuses and the occasional electrocution.

The common sense answer is to find guys you want to date and screw. Easier said than done. The qualities we look for in guys we want to date usually hemorrhage out of the guys we want to screw. You know, like the ability to use verbs in a sentence.

I've spent my share of time in bars. I've never overheard anyone say, "Look at the morals on that stud. I bet he's loyal as shit."

I've never heard anyone say, "You know, I'd really like to open myself up emotionally to the gogo dancer in the middle cage. He seems like a good listener."

Love and sex. Sex and love. They're like ships passing in the night. Mostly because the male pier insists it only has room for one or the other.

Sometimes the ships do run into each other, and for a few glorious moments you experience something other than your neurotic self.

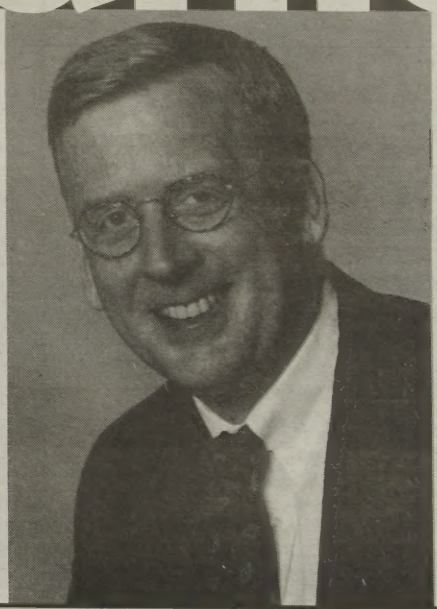
If you're lucky, the moments turn into weeks, the weeks into months and the months into years. Then the problem goes from how you get the ships to run into each other to how you stop them from sinking.

Michael Alvear is the author of "Men Are Pigs But We Love Bacon" and can be reached at michael@menrpigs.cc.

Overturned!

Meet **Paul M. Smith**, the openly gay attorney who successfully argued the landmark case before the U.S. Supreme Court to repeal Texas' "homosexual conduct" law.

Introduction by **Lambda Legal**'s Southern Regional Director **Hector Vargas.**



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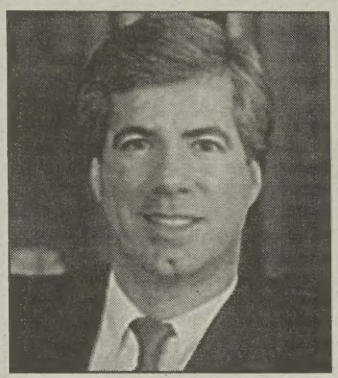
on the record

"Texas, Texas, anti-gay, Bush and Cheney go away!"

Gay rights protesters, picketing a GOP fund-raiser attended by President Bush on June 23, just three days before the Supreme Court struck down the sodomy law in Texas, where Bush was previously the governor (365Gay.com, June 24)



"Regardless of their desires to the contrary, Republicans will not be able to duck-and-cover on this issue. The debate will elevate to a white-hot temperature about what the role of marriage is in society."

***Ken Connor**, outgoing president of the conservative Family Research Council (San Francisco Chronicle, June 15)*

"Clearly [Howard] Dean thinks he has a better shot of winning than he did five months ago, and he's embarrassed and fearful of his close ties to the gay and lesbian community. ... Dean should be ashamed of himself. If you get into bed with a group like these people and use them for your own political purposes, you should at least stick by them until someone calls you on it. Dean's running away from the gays before anyone has raised it as an issue."

An unnamed staffer for Democratic presidential contender John Kerry, a Massachusetts senator, claiming that former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean is distancing himself from gay issues (American Spectator, June 19)

"We saw a very effective military machine in Iraq, and we saw a military machine comprised mostly of young men from working-class backgrounds, many of them from traditional homes in the country in the South and the Midwest who had been raised to look askance at homosexuality, OK? That's what comprises the bulk of our troops. This isn't Canada here."

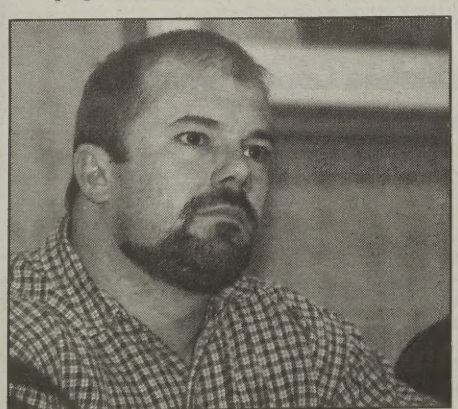
Fox News talk-show host Bill O'Reilly, defending "Don't Ask Don't Tell" ("The O'Reilly Factor," June 18)

"I get uncomfortable talking about sex. As a good Irish-Catholic girl, public discussions of that most private of associations bring out the prude in me. When my school-age kids bring it up, we don't talk about the mechanics, but about love, family, respect, safety, honesty and responsibility. Otherwise, sex is a private matter between my partner and me."

***Joan Garry**, executive director of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, in an opinion column on the Supreme Court sodomy ruling (USA Today, June 16)*

"The values we hold dear — including reproductive freedom, racial justice, and personal liberty — have been seriously eroded by the ideologically driven justices appointed by the Reagan and first Bush administrations."

Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, on the Supreme Court's split decision endorsing the affirmative action program at the University of Michigan's law school but striking down the school's undergrad admissions program (NGLTF statement, June 23)



"We needn't all agree on the issue of homosexuality to believe that the government should treat every citizen alike. If that means living next door to someone of whom we disapprove, so be it. But disapproval needn't mean disrespect. And if the love of two people, committing themselves to each other exclusively for the rest of their lives, is not worthy of respect, then what is?"

*Gay commentator **Andrew Sullivan**, making "the conservative case for gay marriage" (Time Magazine, June 30)*

action! alert

Pundits square off

Conservative objects to radio show appearance with gay writer

By JENNIFER J. SMITH

A WAR OF WORDS DEVELOPED between a noted gay pundit and a conservative columnist after one was apparently dropped from a radio show over the objections of the other earlier this month.

Jonah Goldberg, an editor-at-large for National Review Online, threatened to cancel a planned July 2 appearance on "The Connection," a show produced by WBUR in Boston for National Public Radio, after learning that Michelangelo Signorile, a gay author and columnist for the New York Press, was also scheduled to appear on the show.

Signorile, Goldberg and lesbian author Elizabeth Graf were scheduled July 1 for the next day's show, according to Signorile.

Signorile later received a phone call from the show's producer, telling him he was "off the hook," he said.

"Turns out conservative pundit Goldberg would not do the show with me," Signorile wrote in the New York Press on July 8. "The producer noted that they don't usually let a guest 'dictate' who the other guests are, but that it was late and thus hard to find another conservative. That sounded pretty bogus: Finding a conservative pundit to do a radio program is about as difficult as finding a drag queen at gay pride."

The show on same-sex marriage aired with Goldberg and Graf.

"It had nothing to do with the fact that he's gay and everything to do with the fact that he's an ass," Goldberg told Southern Voice. "I don't respect him. I'm on CNN four times a week with lefties, but he leaves me cold. He writes vicious things, he takes cheap shots at people, and his columns are ad hominem, shitty little arguments."

Signorile called Goldberg "a sissy" for threatening to cancel.

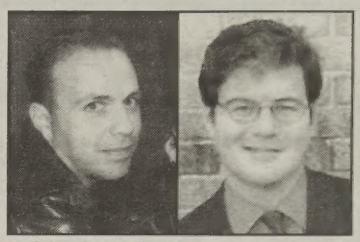
"But I've never heard a man, gay or straight, who used the word 'sissy' and didn't have his own masculinity problems," Goldberg countered.

Signorile defending his writing in an interview this week.

"it was obvious who's writing vilifies entire groups of people. And I've gotten plenty of letters of support from his colleagues," Signorile said.

In the past, Goldberg stoked rumors that D.C. sniper suspects John Allen Muhammad and John Lee Malvo were lovers, and has tongue-lashed the media for not attributing former American Taliban member John Walker Lindh's problems to his gay father.

A WBUR spokesperson declined comment.



Michelangelo Signorile (left), a gay author and columnist for the New York Press, groused in a recent newspaper column about being dumped from a public affairs radio program after **Jonah Goldberg**, an editor for National Review Online, complained.

"We have people away on vacation, so I cannot track down the female producer of the show that Signorile is referring to to confirm any of this," said Mary Stohn, a station spokesperson.

'Best city' nod goes to Tempe, Ariz.

NEIL GIULIANO, THE GAY MAYOR OF Tempe, Ariz., received the coveted "Best America City" nod by the National Civic League June 14, marking what is believed to be the first time an openly gay mayor received the 54-year-old award.

"This isn't about me," Giuliano said. "It's about a community coming together. Every community has challenges; it's how we come together to address them successfully."

Giuliano is one of a small group of openly gay mayors that includes John Fiore in Wilton Manors, Fla., David Cicilline in Providence, R.I., and Jeffrey Prang in West Hollywood, Calif.

Chris Gates, president of the NCL, praised Giuliano's work.

"He's a great mayor, not a great gay mayor,' he said. "I'm an urban studies expert, and I am unaware of any connection between great urban results and sexual orientation."

The civic league annually honors 10 communities that best exemplify grassroots citizen involvement and cross-sector collaborative problem solving, Gates said.

Joining Tempe as All-America cities in 2003: New Haven, Conn.; Miami Beach, Fla.; Des Moines, Iowa; Marquette County, Mich.; Laurinburg, N.C.; South Sioux City, Neb.; Greater Racine Area, Wis.; Wilson, N.C.; and Corpus Christi, Texas.

Tempe also won the award in 1984.

ACTION! INFO

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www.signorile.com
mike@signorile.com

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CONFESSIONS: New book analyzes Catholic church's tendency to hide its inherent problems. **Page 45**

FRESH POP: Hip duo **Cooler Kids** makes its own clothes and courts a gay audience. **Page 35**

You can't hurry love

One man's experience with speed dating rendered little more than disappointment

By MARK O'REILLEY

Speed dating is another attempt by singles to facilitate fate while searching for a soul mate. It can involve rotating as many as 40 people through 25 three-minute dates.

DING! DING! DING! HI, HOW ARE YOU? Where do you live? What do you do? What's your sign? Slippery when Wet? Ha Ha. That's very funny. DING! DING! DING! Times up!

And so it goes in that newest dating craze called speed dating, the latest attempt by lovelorn singles to facilitate destiny in their search for "the one."

The idea: Get 40 people into a room and rotate them through 25 three-minute "dates." If participants "click" during the short courtship, they get each other's e-mail address 48 hours after the event.

Rather than invest an entire night on one potentially lousy date, why not cram two-dozen potentially lousy dates into one arduous evening? But does it work?

To find out, I did an Internet search and found dozens of organizations that offer an evening of quick dates. Most of the major ones offer services to gay singles.

I entered the LoveontheRun.com Web site and reserved my spot at a speed dating event at a local gay bar.

AFTER A FRANTIC 45-MINUTE FASHION SHOW in front of my mirror on the big night, I settled into a Polo shirt and jeans and arrived a few minutes early. After registration in which I became "Mark No. 24," I made my way into the bar full of other daters.

We warily exchanged glances, sipped Bud Lights and checked out the competition. Except for the beer, it reminded me of a sixth grade dance where everyone stands on the sidelines waiting for someone courageous to break the ice.

DING! DING! DING! went a bell you might find at a hotel registration desk.

We each got a little yellow Putt-Putt golf pencil, a clipboard and a score sheet to record pertinent data about our encounters. The sheets were numbered to correspond with our tags.

Each number was followed by a Y, N and F. We were to circle Y if we'd like to see our date again, N if we'd prefer not to, and F if we would just like to be friends.

If we gave mutual Y responses, we could exchange phone numbers via e-mail and set up a second date. If both parties give either an F or a Y, we also got contact information on each other.

My strategy was to be very choosy with my Y's. Since I have never been able to juggle a bunch of boyfriends at once, I was also determined to seek quality not quantity. The same went for F's, because honestly, F just seems to me like a passive/aggressive way of saying no.

DING! DING! DING! GUYS NO. 1 THROUGH NO. 20 sat down randomly, then guys No. 21 through No. 40 were told to sit across from anyone we wanted.

For my first date, I chose Todd No. 11 with spiked black hair and earrings. I was not attracted to him, but figured he would be a good "practice" date while I got the hang of it.

DING! DING! DING! The room exploded in

Please see **SPEED DATING** on **Page 51**

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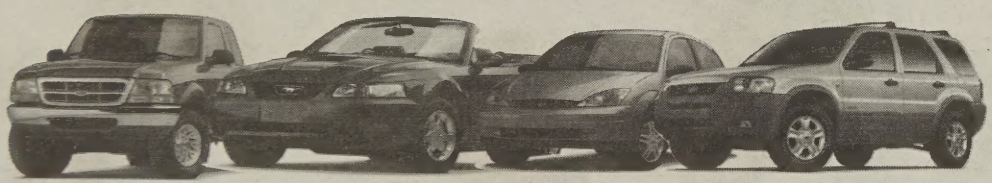

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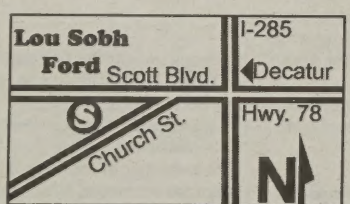

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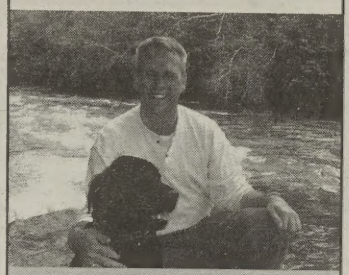

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Upbeat duo offes '80s retro beats with new pop CD to challenge 'angry rock' with **'fabulous punk' vibe.**

Have a 'Cooler' pop

SISLEY TREASURE WAS AN AVID Internet chatter and often used America Online to find like-minded people to make music, go to raves and hang out.

When the club kid and fashion maven found DJ Kaz Gamble in AOL's member directory, it was a match made in pop heaven.

Treasure, 21, was looking for a singing gig, and Gamble, 26, was searching for a vocalist for his new music project.

"I only randomly check my AOL email account, but I fortunately found Sisley's e-mail," Gamble says. "Her timing was perfect. She sent over some tapes of her singing and dancing, and she got the job."

Treasure and Gamble formed the group Cooler Kids and started working in the studio on their first record together with production team Pop-Rox. The fruit of their labor is the debut "Punk Debutante," which hit store shelves this week.

The album features 12 tracks that offer an infectious fusion of catchy melodies, disco-house arrangements and a heavy dose of ultra-hip attitude.

Songs including "All Around the World," "Morning Star" and "Hook Up" are instant hits for their irresistible pop quality.

IN PREPARATION FOR THE RECORD release, Cooler Kids hit the gay scene to build a strong fan base for their new-millennium vibe. Earlier this year, they opened for Erasure during their North American tour.

"That tour was so much fun," Treasure giggles. "We got to see a free Erasure concert every night."

With her offbeat style and pseudo valley girl antics, Los Angeles native Treasure is quite the hag that gays love to embrace. The feelings are mutual.

"It is really fun to perform in front of all the gay boys. They're my favorite audience," she raves. "Gays have been really accepting of the party vibe that we bring. Not just the music, but also our fashion. I make our entire wardrobe, and gays are so appreciative and responsive."

To celebrate their debut CD with their growing gay audience, Cooler Kids had their own float in New York City's Pride parade this year.

Gamble had a very clear vision when he wrote the album, he says.

"Most importantly, I simply wanted to make good pop songs," Gamble says. "Sing-along, whistle tunes. I wanted to compete with classic songwriters such as Carol King, the Beatles and Abba."

The album's production is surprisingly sophisticated for a seemingly carefree pop album.

Sisley Treasure and **Kaz Gamble** met on the Internet and later created Cooler Kids, a fun pop band with a hip look and a wide audience in mind.

"We have strong songs, but then we have tripped-out sounds, beats, flips and other sound effects that people might not have heard before," Gamble says.

And there was a reason to call the album "Punk Debutante" in a time when even Avril Lavigne is considered punk.

"Honestly, we feel it is punk to be fabulous," Gamble says. "We want to be glamorous, and that is our punk vibe against the norm."

The group's hip style is also reflected on the album cover, which was shot by famed gay photographer David LaChapelle.

COOLER KIDS' MELODIES OFTEN seem reminiscent of music that dominated the charts in the '80s.

"We continued to do '80s drum-'n-base that nobody liked for a while," Gamble says. "Now we're bringing it back and the crowds are loving it."

Treasure has an idea for synth '80s lovers: "People can pretend we're big '80s stars and this is our come-back record."

The two pop purists say that their music will appeal to a wide audience.

"People are fed up with hearing the same angry rock-'n-roll. We relate to that. We had to make this album, because nobody else is making it," Gamble says.

MORE INFO

'Punk Debutante'
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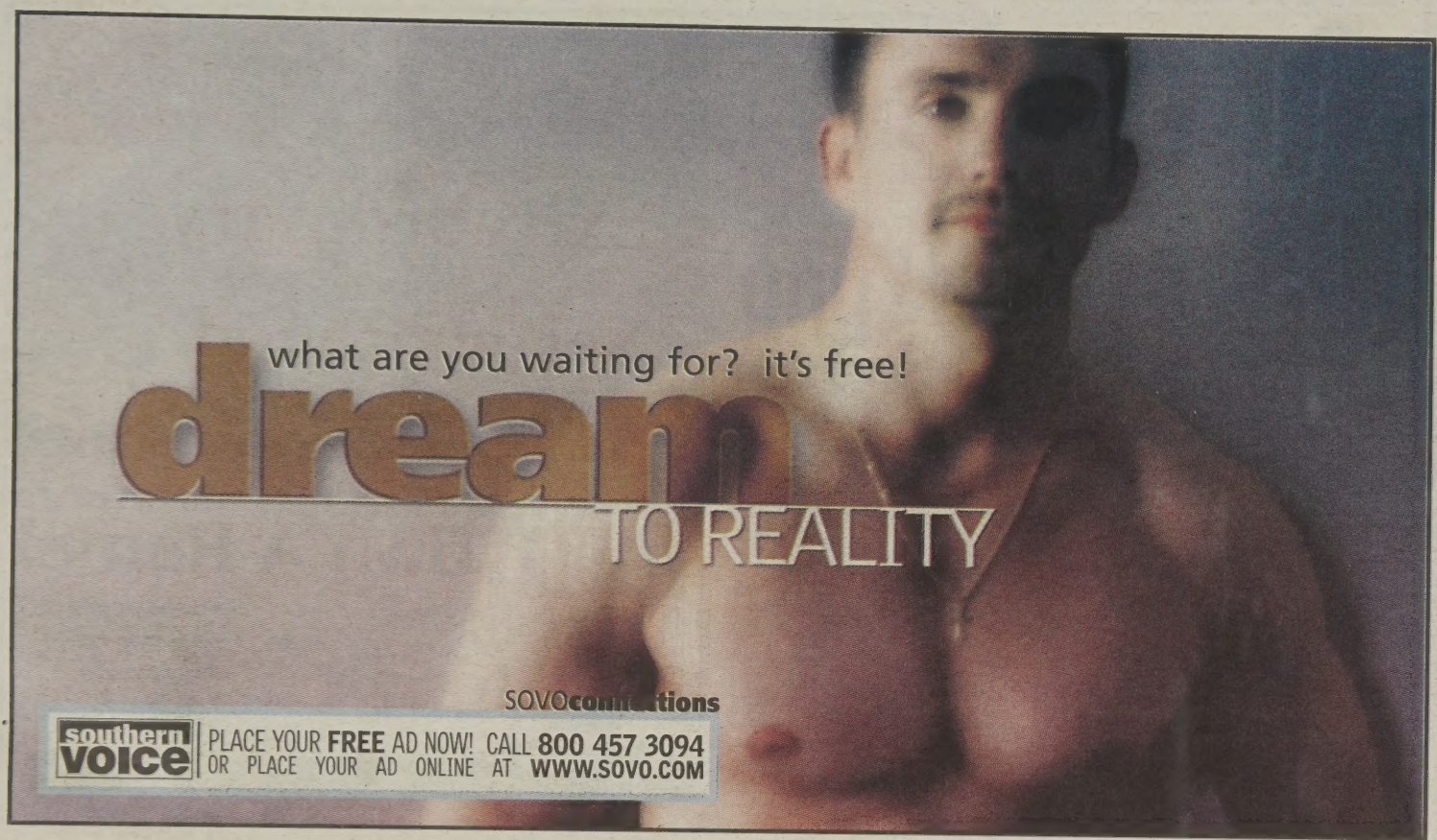
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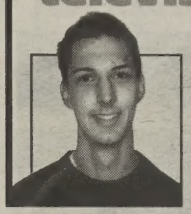

Bravo reality show that pits five gay experts against **fashion-challenged** straight guys has elements of a hit.

This 'Eye' a real prize

EXECUTIVES AT BRAVO ARE MAKing good on their promise to debut a show based on the myth that gay men have a fashion sense from which straight guys could benefit.

The network's newest show, "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," which debuts with a special double feature on July 15, offers five gay fashion and lifestyle experts who take a dowdy straight guy and make him and his living space into something a little more fabulous.

The experts, or the "Fab Five" as they are called on the show, are food expert and Esquire magazine columnist Ted Allen, Aveda stylist Kyan Douglas, interior decorator Thom Filicia, former Ralph Lauren stylist Carson Kressley, and actor Jai Rodriguez, who had a long-running gig in "Rent" on Broadway.

The five are let loose each episode on a straight man who needs polish. They show up at the man's house, pick on everything he owns and then begin redoing his clothes, image, hairstyle, living space and demeanor.

Each episode is centered around a big event for the straight guy — like a gallery opening or a wife's birthday party — so they pick out an outfit, pick out some food and wine, advise him how to behave and then cut him loose.

The last 20 minutes of each hour-long episode shows the straight guy alone at said event with the "Fab Five" watching his behavior from afar and commenting on the work they did.

This last segment of the show is boring, bringing the show to a screeching halt. With makeover shows, viewers want to see the before and after shots. With all the changes these guys make, there is plenty of that payoff, but once it's all gone, the critique section just lags.

THE SHOW WOULDN'T HURT FROM some tightening and increased pace, but it is pretty enjoyable and informative viewing.

The gurus offer all sorts of great tips for men — both gay and straight alike — so the audience can learn basics like how to tie a necktie and more advanced nuggets like how to combine stripes with checks.

The chemistry between the hosts is superb, and they seem to have their roles down pat. Kressley is absolutely the star of the show. Not only does he pick out some great outfits for the straight guys (if only he would do the same for himself), but he is a classic camp queen.

The 'Fab Five,' as they are known on 'Queer Eye for the Straight Guy,' includes fashionista **Carson Kressley** (left), food expert **Ted Allen**, stylist **Kyan Douglas**, decorator **Thom Filicia**, and culture consultant **Jai Rodriguez**. (Photo courtesy of NBC)

Arriving in a straight guy's redone apartment, he says, "Oh look, you put a living room where the crack den used to be." He wisecracks his way through each episode, and every joke is witty and right on the mark.

Allen is the quiet, snarky one, Filicia is the serious one, Douglas is the hot one, and Rodriguez, well, we're still not sure exactly what he's supposed to do or what his schtick is — but he's cute and likeable, so it's ok.

ONE DRAWBACK OF THE SHOW IS that the audience is never made aware of the team member's credentials. The show doesn't tell you why each of these men knows the job they're doing — or in Rodriguez's case, standing around looking pretty.

The show just assumes that because they're gay and they look good that you'll believe they have good taste. Well, they do have good taste, but letting the audience know that comes from years of experience and training rather than "the gay gene" would be nice.

Regardless, with the "Fab Five" on the scene every straight guy in America might call their gay friends and brothers a little less often for fashion advice.

MORE INFO
'Queer Eye for the Straight Guy'
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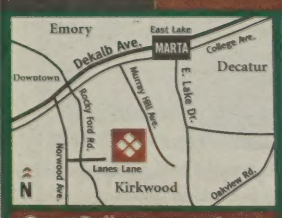

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Man-boy love makes touchy subject for **worthwhile, suspenseful** novel that may make some uncomfortable.

Look, but don't touch

IN LIGHT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S sex abuse cover-ups and resulting scandals in Boston, ephebophilia — the topic of adult male-adolescent boy sex and sexual attraction — has rarely been a more timely subject for a novel. Never one to shy from controversy, author Michael Lowenthal follows a path that few authors dare to tread.

In the impressive result, "Avoidance," Lowenthal definitely avoids the dreaded sophomore slump syndrome and delivers a narrative that's both thoughtful and suspenseful.

"Avoidance" explores the concepts of ostracism and exile as they apply to isolated communities — in this case, the Amish community of Pennsylvania as well as Camp Ironwood, a boys' summer camp in Vermont.

Harvard grad student Jeremy Stull bridges these disparate groups. He's studying the Amish and their shunning rituals for his thesis and spends his summers as a camp counselor and director at Ironwood.

His father died when Jeremy was eight, and his mother enlisted in the Army to make ends meet. Accustomed to a wandering life, Jeremy found a home at Ironwood as a child and a father figure in Ruff, the charismatic ex-military man who ran the camp.

One of the campers endears himself to Jeremy. Fourteen-year-old Max breaks his wrist on the first day of camp, starting a chain of events that keeps Jeremy and him in close proximity.

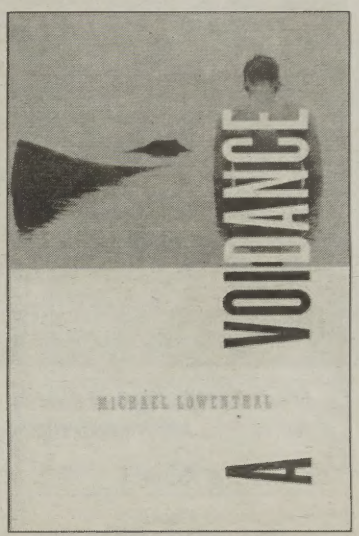
JEREMY FINDS MAX'S COMBINATION of adolescent bravado and moments of genuine vulnerability an intoxicating mixture, and the more time Jeremy spends with him, the deeper their bond grows. To his initial horror, Jeremy soon realizes that his feelings for Max are more than platonic.

But before he acts on those feelings, Max confides a dark secret: one of the other adult men at Ironwood sexually molested him. At the same time, painkillers go missing from the camp infirmary, and Max appears to be the prime suspect.

This leaves Jeremy in a dilemma: if he believes Max and reports the incident, he'll be turning in a close friend and exposing his closest equivalent of a home to scandal and possible ruin.

Lowenthal's prose radiates poise, treating an undignified subject matter in a dignified manner. Largely passive, sexually abstinent and continually wrestling with his conscience, Jeremy transcends the "Chester the Molester" stereotype and begs the question of whether attraction to one adolescent makes him a pedophile.

Lowenthal further challenges our preconceived notions on the subject of ephebophilia and youth-adult attraction.



Author Michael Lowenthal deftly tackles the risky subject of ephebophilia in his timely novel 'Avoidance.'

EQUALLY WELL-WRITTEN ARE THE Amish segments of "Avoidance," in which Jeremy remembers visiting a settlement, living among the Yoder family and learning their strict codes of conduct.

"Try to imagine not even knowing how to fall, because a hand was always, always there to catch you," he writes of their close ties.

Critics ridicule the Amish and their ways, but Jeremy comes to admire their rigid boundaries.

He knows all too well that life outside the Amish world isn't nearly so black and white or easily defined, as much as he wishes it was.

A beautifully written book concerning a distasteful premise, "Avoidance" may well repel as many readers as it entrances. Lowenthal never flinches from describing moments of genuine beauty or desire within heinous acts, or how desperately and painfully a young man can want something that will prove so destructive to him.

The characters rarely get to make easy decisions, and Lowenthal's fiction becomes that much more powerfully compelling as a result. Kudos to Lowenthal for taking a risk, and to Graywolf Press for publishing it.

FOR MORE INFO

'Avoidance'
By Michael Lowenthal
Graywolf Press, 2002, trade paperback, 272 pages, $16.00

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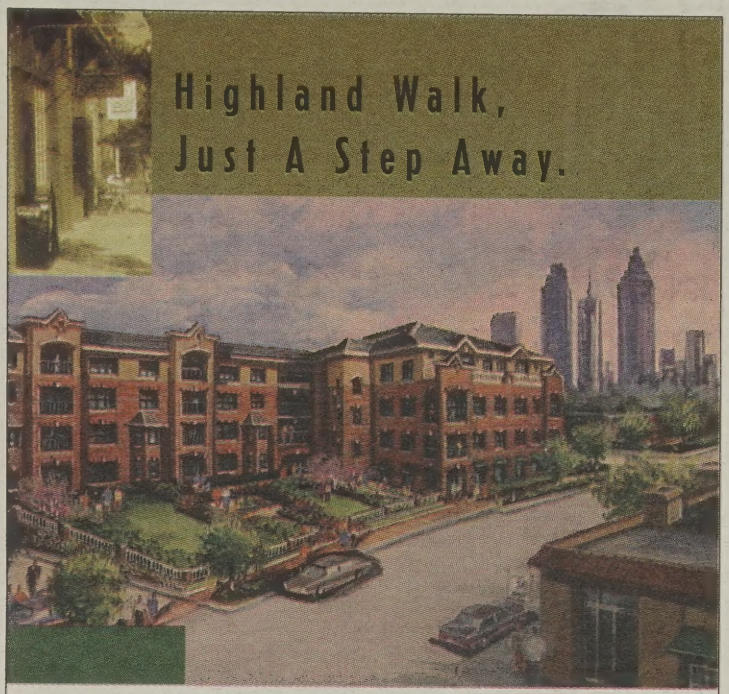

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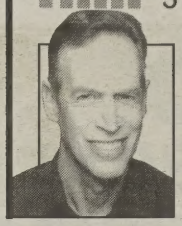


Lesbian shorts compilation scores, Chamberlain flick capitalizes on hype in two **queer summer video releases.**

Girls fare better than boys

THE ONLY VIABLE MARKET FOR short films of late is compilations for gay men. Hoping to replicate that success among lesbians, Wolfe Video presents "Watching You," a diverse collection of the best recent female-oriented shorts with a pair of '90s flashbacks as DVD bonus tracks.

Samantha Bakhurst and Lea Morement's English comedy "4 p.m." tells the story of two women who come together in "a high-risk, perfectly executed one-nighter" with an amusingly imperfect aftermath as one is inadvertently locked in the other's apartment.

Deborah Strutt's Australian novelty "Bare" takes place one morning in opposing apartments, as two gay men get turned on watching two women going at it.

With good writing and acting, Cassandra Nicolaou achieves more in one room in "Interviews with My Next Girlfriend" than Hollywood does shooting in global locations with digital trickery. In this Canadian comedy, seven singles and a couple, all with individual quirks and agendas, apply for the eponymous position.

THE PACKAGE TAKES ITS NAME FROM Stephanie Abramovich's near-perfect Israeli short "Watching You," about two women who want "no more drama" in their lives — at least not the old drama.

Apparently re-cut since I first saw it and resolving my objections, Katherine Brooks' compact tale "Dear Emily" is a short, sweet story anyone who's had an unrequited crush on a friend can relate to.

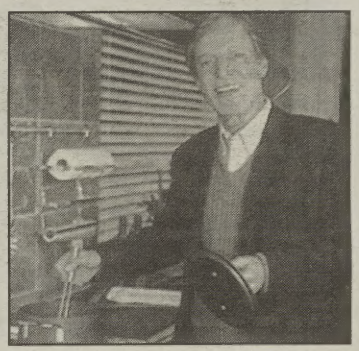
In Lee Friedlander's "The Ten Rules (A Lesbian Survival Guide)," screenwriter Michelle Paradise addresses the camera to introduce newbies to dykehood at a birthday party where the guests illustrate and affirm all the stereotypes of Sapphic sisters.

John Hughes might have made Paula Goldberg's "Traveling Companion" if he were a lesbian. A travel writer (Susan Savage) who advertises for company to Italy needn't have bothered if she paid more attention to the waitress in her favorite coffee shop.

Last and least, "Double Entente" by Jacquie Lawrence takes an old joke around the block one more time as a woman whose partner cancels their date gets picked up by a stranger in a bar.

I'm jealous that none of the gay male collections have been as consistently good as "Watching You."

THE DIRECTOR OF "RIVER MADE TO Drown In" disowned it (it's billed as "An Alan Smithee Film"), it never played theaters and took six years for video release. And a false claim is being used to hype it ("Richard Chamberlain in his first gay role" ignores his Tchaikovsky in "The Music Lovers").



If **Richard Chamberlain** hadn't come out, neither would have 'River Made to Drown In,' released last month on home video.

Considering all that, "River Made to Drown In" isn't so bad. A little more of a "train wreck" quality would have made it fun, rather than just a mediocre drama. If Chamberlain hadn't come out, this movie wouldn't have either.

Dressed in white like a slimmer Truman Capote and occasionally going over the top, he plays Thaddeus, a retired lawyer dying of AIDS. He has loved only twice in his life, both hustlers.

Allen (Michael Imperioli), with whom Thaddeus once spent three years, is no longer the same kind of hustler. He now sleeps with Eva (singer Ute Lemper), a gallery owner who's promised him an exhibition.

Thaddeus moves in with Allen and asks him to find his other hustler-lover Jaime (James Duval), but the cocky young hustler doesn't want to be found.

Imperioli hints at the acting talent that would coalesce on "The Sopranos." Lemper, in a non-singing role, shows little personality. Duval, never more than eye candy, doesn't even fill that function as well as he has in past films.

MORE INFO

'Watching You'

○○○

Queer Quotient: All lesbian, all the time, except the one short that sneaks in a gay male couple.

'River Made to Drown In'

○○

Queer Quotient: The cast also includes Austin Pendleton and Michael Kearns. Most of the characters, including all the males, are gay or bi.

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dish There's a Fine Line Between Telling the Truth and Talking Trash

Homophobic TV talk host **Michael Savage** gets ax in 'easy decision' from MSNBC after hurling on-air slurs against gays.

Taming the Savage beast

MICHAEL SAVAGE, THE TELEVISION and radio talk show host criticized for anti-gay comments, got fired from his most recent gig after making rather defamatory remarks against a gay man who called into the show.

On July 5, Savage was doing an episode of the "The Savage Nation," which aired at 5 p.m. on the all-news cable station MSNBC, about airline horror stories. When he realized a person who called into the show was gay he replied, "Oh, you're one of the sodomites. You should only get AIDS and die, you pig ... You got nothing better than to put me down, you piece of garbage. You have got nothing to do today, go eat a sausage and choke on it."

With all the cookouts over Fourth of July weekend, plenty of gays probably were eating sausage, since it is part of the Atkins diet. But Savage's comments still don't make a lot of sense.

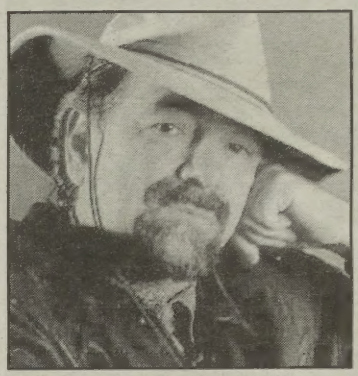
Savage was fired on Monday.

"His comments were extremely inappropriate, and the decision was an easy one," Jeremy Gaines, a spokesperson for MSNBC, told the Associated Press.

What many may not realize is that Savage is actually a "reformed" liberal who was born **MICHAEL WEINER.**

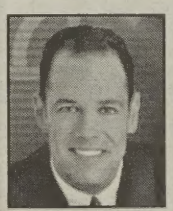
The most recent issue of Radar magazine says that Weiner was great friends with gay poet **ALLEN GINSBERG**. Apparently the two swapped letters quite frequently and were close friends. A source told the magazine that there are even pictures of the two swimming naked together off the coast of Fiji.

Thankfully, the pictures haven't surfaced yet, so we don't have to suffer the sight of a naked Weiner.



Michael Savage, whose real name is Michael Weiner, was great friends with gay beat poet Allen Ginsberg.

IN NEW YORK CITY, WABC NEWS anchor **STEVE BARTELSTEIN** is fighting a lawsuit brought by a gay producer who alleges Bartelstein sexually harassed and stalked him, the New York Post reports.



Steve Bartelstein

In the suit, Roderick McCollum alleges that Bartelstein invited him to his office to use crystal meth during work one day. He also claims that Bartelstein invited him to his house for a party, but that McCollum was the only guest. Once inside the apartment, Bartelstein showed McCollum naked pictures of himself, the paper reports.

When McCollum spurned these advances, he claims that Bartelstein stood outside his apartment shining a laser pointer at him through the window.

Bartelstein's lawyer told the Post that these allegations were "outrageous," and that they planned to counter-sue for defamation of character.

A few days after the Post wrote about the suit, its gossip column Page Six reported that Bartelstein is a notorious figure on the New York gay scene and is known for being a little kinkier than most.

THE '80S BAND **TOTO**, WHICH MADE hits out of the songs "Roseanna" and "Africa," took a joke all the way on their Web site.

On June 16, the Web site www.toto99.com announced that keyboard player David Paich wouldn't join the band on their summer tour because he is undergoing gender reassignment surgery.

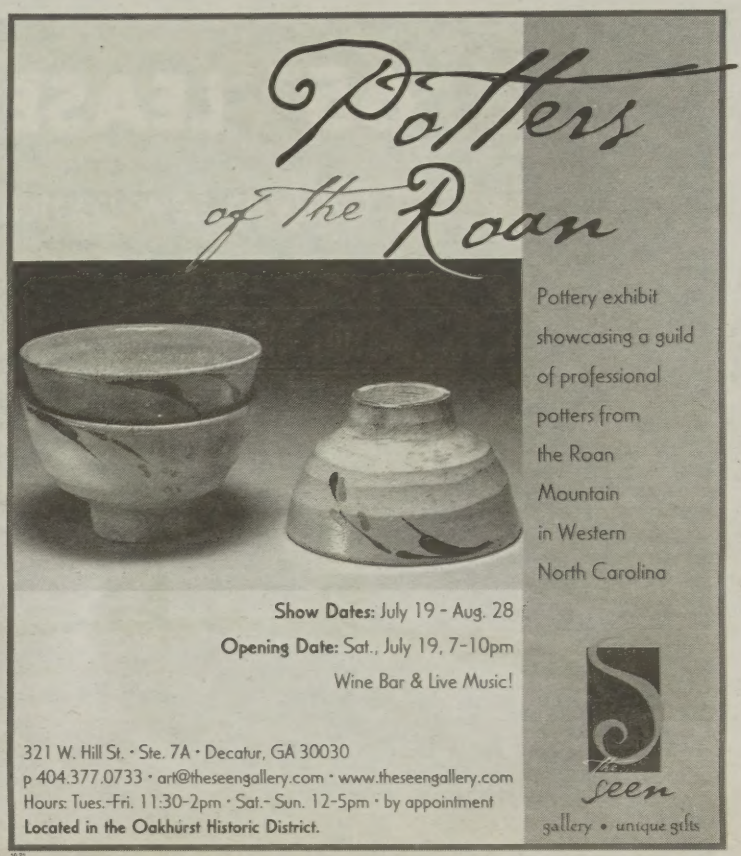
"The lie he has been living has been difficult for his family and for us as a band. It will be our pleasure to introduce 'Davida' in the fall," the posting said.

The eager beavers at some gay news outlets picked up the story only to find out that it was a joke.

The next day, band guitarist Steve Lukather told the Advocate that Paich will be off the tour because a member of his family is seriously ill.

"One look at Dave, and you would see it's an impossible story," he said.

Send comments, suggestions to Dish@sovo.com.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The language of scandal and redemption

Gay Catholic scholar from Emory takes talking in church to a new level

By MIKE FLEMING

IN A SOMETIMES SENSATIONALISTIC barrage, news reports that began in 2002 on the pedophilia "crisis" in the Boston Archdiocese quickly began to concern Atlanta author Mark Jordan, who was already addressing Catholic church cover-ups as part of his studies.

Fate landed Jordan, a religion professor at Emory University, in Boston just as the sexual abuse scandal began receiving widespread media attention. There to deliver talks on priests who sexually abuse and the church's handling of such situations, his presentations took on eerie timing and raw nerves as the city was still getting used to the news.

One problem Jordan identified was that media coverage quickly honed in on gay priests and related pedophilic abuse to homosexuality, "largely because that was deliberately offered as an explanation by the church," Jordan says.

"There was the attempt to shift attention from this very ugly set of stories about pedophilia to something they wanted to get rid of anyway: out gay priests," he says. "It served their purpose to scapegoat out gay priests, when in fact some of the most vocal critics of the pedophile abuse have been out gay priests."

Another issue for Jordan was that, by their very nature, media reports can't cover the intricate depth of history that led the church to spin and cover up events, and there are no set parameters for discussing sex — much less same-sex interaction — in media reports or even within the church.

Finally, the events in Boston bothered Jordan, he said, because they differed from a long history of similar events only in their ability to hold extended national attention.

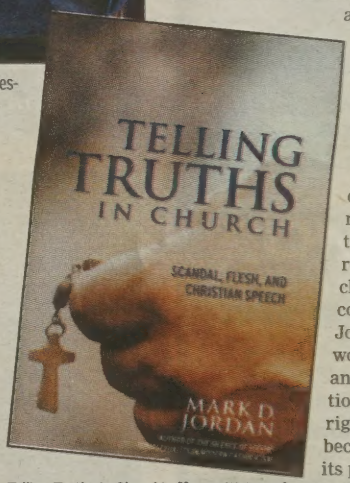
"We can't continue to treat this scandal in isolation," Jordan says. "The problem is not solved by calling this a one-time mistake, because in fact, it exposes this much deeper uneasiness that the Christian church has had with sex and especially same-sex love."

JORDAN'S BOSTON SPEECHES became the basis for his latest book, "Telling Truths in Church: Scandal, Flesh & Christian Speech," an attempt to weave together what the author calls

Mark Jordan, a religion professor at Emory University, discusses and signs his latest book during a local appearance next week. (Photo by Tim Wilkerson)

"a half-dozen major topics of Christianity and sex."

Jordan also wrote "The Silence of Sodom: Homosexuality in Modern Catholicism," "The Ethics of Sex" and "The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology." He is scheduled to discuss and sign copies of his latest work July 16 at Outwrite Bookstore & Coffehouse.



'Telling Truths in Church' offers criticism of Catholic cover-ups, the official aversion to sex and an exploration of how to talk about the issues within and outside the church.

"Most theological writing is so unreadable, but I'm interested in writing about these topics in a powerful way, using all the tools of fiction writing and of poetry and story telling that a larger audience can relate to," Jordan says

"Telling Truths in Church" takes readers beyond the priest scandal to how the Christian church handles all aspects of sex, including homosexuality.

What may cause the most controversy in the book is Jordan's assertion that homosexuality is written into a number of major Christian teachings and practices, and that Jesus was necessarily a "sexed male."

"The bedrock of Christian faith is that Jesus became fully human, and the only way you can be fully human is to fall somewhere on the sexual scale," Jordan says. "We either have to say he had sexual desires or that those desires aren't part of being fully human."

FINDING WAYS TO TALK ABOUT SEX within Christian teaching is paramount for gays, since they may have an unusually high stake in the outcome, according to Jordan.

"Many lesbians and gay men have profound religious experiences in adolescence, and for many of us as well, that's connected to our discovery of being queer," Jordan says. "Part of it has to do with the fact that religious organizations are very queer spaces, where gender gets bent in interesting ways, places where a lot of people don't conform to standard models of marriage and family.

"A lot of queer youth put on religious identities as a stepping stone to coming out," he says.

Gays who develop strong religious identities then feel rejected by the church form the cornerstone for Jordan's future work and next book: answering the question of why the gay rights movement has become secular when its past intrinsically includes religion.

After multiple books on theology — many of them directly related to homosexuality and the church — Jordan appears to be the man for the job, and he has no plans to slow down, he says.

"I'm restless, and I'm always moving on," Jordan says.

MORE INFO

'Telling Truths in Church: Scandal, Flesh & Christian Speech'
Beacon Press, 2003
121 pages, $24

Mark Jordan booksigning
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Friends of Dorothy should 'fly, fly' to see **'The Wizard of Oz'** on the big screen at 8 p.m. as part of the Coca-Cola Summer Film Festival at Fox Theatre, 660 Peachtree St. 404-881-2100, www.foxtheatre.org, www.ticketmaster.com

THURSDAY JULY 17

'Hairspray' and **'Polyester,'** two films from the oeuvre of gay director John Waters starring **Divine**, screen at 8 p.m. as a double feature for the Coca-Cola Summer Film Festival at the Fox Theatre, 660 Peachtree St. NE. 404-881-2100, www.foxtheatre.org, www.ticketmaster.com

FRIDAY JULY 18

The annual **National Black Arts Festival** opens to celebrate African-American expression through all aspects of the arts at participating Midtown and Intown venues through July 27. For schedule, call 404-730-7315 or visit www.nbaf.org.

Four siblings, including a gay brother, spar over the inheritance of their family's beachfront property in the Dutch romantic comedy **'Zus and Zo,'** opening at Madstone Theatres Parkside, 5920 Roswell Road. 404-252-2000, www.madstonetheatres.com

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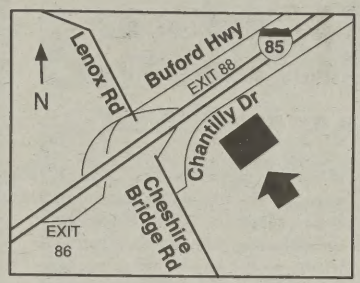

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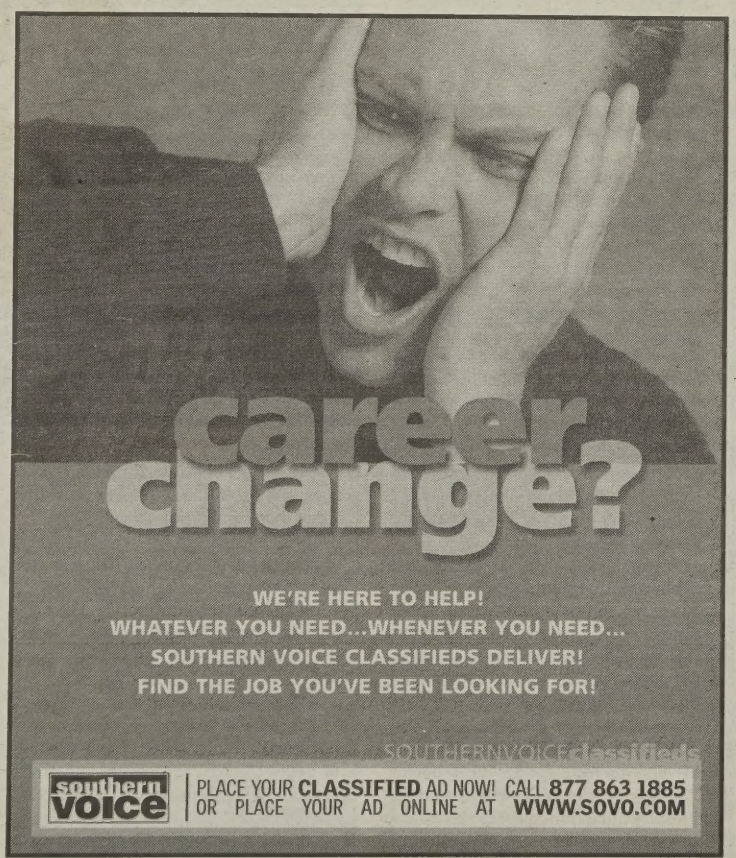

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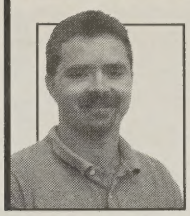

Cast of experts does justice to first of annual **Shakespeare Fest** trio with well-rounded tribute to Moliere.

It's time to rhyme

EVERY SUMMER, GEORGIA SHAKEspeare Festival's triumvirate of work often proves to be one of the season's highlights. Chris Kayser, regarded as Atlanta's premiere actor, headlines two of the 2003 offerings: Kenny Leon's "Much Ado About Nothing" and the just-opened "The School of Wives."

In Ranjit Bolt's rhyming translation of the Moliere work "Wives," Kayser stars as Arnolphe. Proudly sexist, he plans to marry his ward Agnes (Karan Kendrick) who he has practically raised since the age of four and has kept hidden — either in a convent or tucked away from others.

Fearing that he might get cuckolded, Arnolphe keeps Agnes almost hostage, watched over by servants. He views her as a half-wit, and his theory is that by marrying a dunce — someone who will "sew, pray and love" him — their marriage will be bliss. But he finds out almost by surprise that he has another competitor for the hand of Agnes: a friend's son, Horace, a much younger lad played by Daniel May.

Agnes has gratitude for Arnolphe and all that he has done for her, but she feels weak in the knees for the courting and swooning Horace. Ironically, Arnolphe begins to love Agnes more when he realizes he has competition.

Director Karen Robinson, wife of GSF artistic director Richard Garner, turned "Wives" into a vaudevillian delight. And although the over-the-top nature of the show takes some time to get used to, it's refreshingly good-natured.

ROBINSON CAST THIS SHOW IMPECcably. Even the small roles are top-notch — from Chris Ensweiler's notary to the slapstick antics of Arnolphe's slaves Georgette (Courtney Patterson) and Alain (Tracey Copeland).

May has a high ole time as the lovestruck Horace, unintentionally rubbing his affection for Agnes in his friend's face, not knowing that Agnes supposedly belongs to Arnolphe. But Kayser, as he frequently serves, is the glue that holds the show together.

Known primarily for his dramatic roles, he is one of the festival's perennials. He reveals a wicked comic side here, nailing laughs easily and making the villainous Arnolphe almost likable in his naivete and ill-advised attempts at love.

Newcomer Kendrick is sufficient as the supposed idiot Agnes, but her character doesn't have the dimensions she could or should have. The fun is seeing her turn out to be much more of an adversary than Arnolphe ever planned or imagined she could be. It must also be said that the interracial aspects of "The School of Wives," with Agnes an African-American woman, make it a much more interesting production.

Chris Kayser (right) tries to woo **Karen Kendrick** in an excellent production of 'The School of Wives,' currently running in repertory at the Georgia Shakespeare Festival.

Light on its feet and paced well, "The School of Wives" is a tart summer show for GSF, nicely done all around. It whets the appetite for "Much Ado About Nothing" and the rarely-produced "The Tale of Cymbeline," the third leg of the festival opening this weekend.

ALSO THIS WEEKEND, HORIZON opens the second feature of its New South Play Festival. It's the one-man show "The Fula From America," relayed by playwright and performer Carlyle Brown.

"Fula" follows Brown's adventures to Africa and the lessons — cultural and otherwise — that he learns about himself and others. Traditionally, the second play in Horizon's fest is the superior, more cutting-edge feature. Think of past season gems such as "Hambone" and a "A Hole in the Dark."

Luckily, there aren't any mermaids, women with wings or beauty queens in this production.

MORE INFO

'The School of Wives'
In repertory through Aug. 10
Conant Arts Center/Oglethorpe University
4484 Peachtree Road, NE
404-264-0020

'The Fula From America'
Through Aug. 10
Horizon Theater
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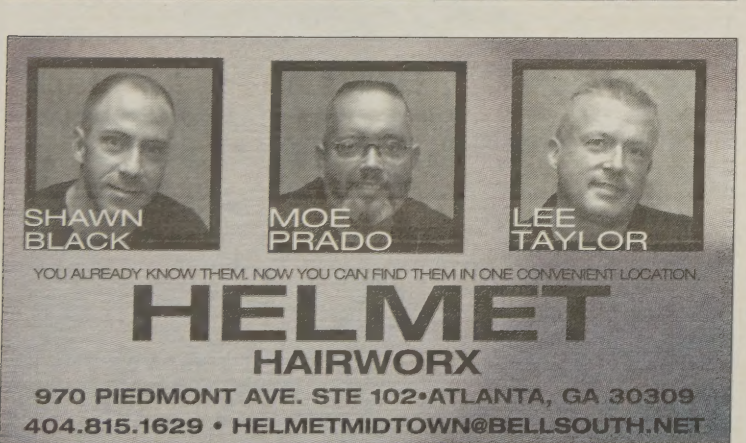
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dining JONATHAN LERNER

So-so food doesn't live up to claim that diners will find **in-town quality** in Twin Peaks-like Hapetown near airport.

South side surrealism

IT IS NO SECRET THAT WORLDLINESS and affluence gravitate to Atlanta's northern half. Good restaurants follow. Thus the very suggestion of a sophisticated place to eat south of I-20 is both counterintuitive and intriguing.

But it's not impossible. Note Iris in East Atlanta or Oscar's in College Park, both as coolly civilized as any bistro in Buckhead or Virginia Highlands.

So the claim that 623 is a new eatery that brings a Midtown spirit to Hapeville cries out for investigation.

Hapeville is a separate little burg surrounded by Atlanta that hugs the northern boundary of Hartsfield Airport. It has a classic old main street.

There's a handsome, marble-fronted Masonic lodge, a circa 1921 drug store in which the original soda fountain is being restored, and a charming 19th century carpenter-gothic church.

But Hapeville feels less like an antique village than a time warp, less like a scene from tourist brochure than a setting from a David Lynch movie. Numerous storefront churches have strung-together names that juxtapose words like "holiness" and "fire." The whine of descending jetliners is muted but ceaseless.

My expedition to Hapeville is rendered further surreal when it turns out that, on this night, the Lions club has taken over 623's dining room. Picture ladies in big hair, gents in goofy yellow vests stuck with emblems and badges.

So a seat on 623's wide sidewalk terrace seems the better choice. Its metal furniture looks scary but proves ample and quite comfortable.

THE MENU HAS A WORLDLY CONtemporary gloss. Bruschetta and vegetable quesadillas are offered as starters.

But what's actually served here is gussied up comfort food, rich and heavy. The more representative offerings are an iceberg salad with bleu cheese and bacon, a meatloaf and fettucini alfredo.

Consider a "specialty" dinner of salmon ($14): a grilled filet smothered with gorgonzola cheese with a parmesan cream sauce on top. Lions might not know much about cuisine, but they sure know what they like to eat.

Semolina bread arrives with a dish of garlicky, elaborately herbed olive oil — tasty, if over the top. Nor is the chef bashful with the garlic in his hummus appetizer ($5) — and that's a good thing.

This bargain platter has a generous mound of the spread dotted with feta and accompanied by grilled pita wedges, sliced cucumber, peperoncini and a heap of those squeaky tasteless sliced black olives that come from a can.

Oddly, the Caesar salad ($3) is big and crisp but blandly dressed.

A dinner plate of rainbow trout ($13) is only ok. The fish has a dusting of cornmeal that doesn't add interesting texture, and its flesh is just short of mushy.

It comes with "vegetable couscous," in which the only vegetable evident is diced carrot, and a stir-fry of snow peas and baby corn. Baby corn raises the specter once again of cans, but at least this melange is not oily.

But the pork chop dinner ($15) is pretty awful. It has the same stir fry, and some chunky mashed redskin potatoes that are hard to fault. But the chop itself is virtually incinerated. Its surface is thickly, crustily charred, and the meat is tough and dry.

It is napped with sliced mushrooms in a gluey dark marsala sauce. Surely the mushrooms are fresh, but they manage to approximate that rubbery canned texture. And the diced onion in this mixture is barely transparent, not really cooked.

623 HAS FINE INTENTIONS. SERVICE is cheerful, and prices aren't bad.

But Midtown it ain't.

The kitchen needs to use a more careful choice of ingredients and a lighter touch.

In the meantime, visit Hapeville for that listless weird frisson that you have entered Twin Peaks.

623

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national news

Supreme Court ruling raises hopes and legal questions

SODOMY DECISION continued from Page 15

remove one of the main roadblocks to repealing 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell.'"

Ralls noted that the DADT policy is based, in part, on the premise that gays cannot serve openly in the military because they would be identified as lawbreakers in connection with the sodomy prohibition. Ralls said SLDN expects service members charged with violating the sodomy clause to challenge the law's constitutionality within the next few months, using the Lawrence decision as the basis for their challenge.

Courts historically have made exceptions for the military in court rulings that observers have dubbed as a "military deference," Ralls said. He said it is unclear whether federal courts would uphold or strike down the military's sodomy law in response to the recent Supreme Court decision.

Major Michael Shavers, a Pentagon spokesperson, said the Defense Department was studying the Lawrence decision to determine how it will proceed with enforcing the UCMJ sodomy clause.

In another area of uncertainty, Patricia Logue, Lambda's legal director, said gay civil rights attorneys were looking with great interest at the possible impact of the Lawrence decision on pending lawsuits in New Jersey and Massachusetts that are challenging those states' marriage laws.

John Lawrence and **Tyron Garner** have been the subject of intensified media scrutiny since the U.S. Supreme Court threw out the Texas sodomy law based on the men's arrests in 1998. After a June 26 press conference in Houston, the pair was followed by about a dozen reporters and photographers. Leaving the center are (from left) Lambda Legal's **Lee Taft**, Garner, Lawrence and attorney **Mitchell Katine** (partially obscured). (Photo by Penny Weaver)

Logue noted that the lawsuits, filed by same-sex couples, are based on the assertion that the equal protection clause in each of the constitutions in the two states prohibit New Jersey and Massachusetts from banning same-sex marriage.

"The Lawrence case won't have a direct impact," Logue said. But she said the decision could boost arguments that gays should be treated fairly under the law.

Lawrence may not overturn past convictions

Arthur Spitzer, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union of the National Capital Area, said the Lawrence decision would not automatically overturn convictions against persons charged with sodomy in the past. Spitzer said laws determining whether convictions in "old" cases can be overturned vary from state to state, but many states have no legal mechanism for overturning or expunging criminal convictions once all court appeals are completed or after a certain period of time.

Spitzer said the Lawrence decision also would be of no help to persons with sodomy convictions who are required to register as sex offenders under state laws. Spitzer said the sex offender registration laws are linked to criminal convictions on various charges. In some states, consensual sodomy is among the charges that trigger a requirement to register, gay activists have said.

According to Spitzer, the registration statutes, known as "Megan's laws," would not allow the removal of the name of a convicted "sex offender" from the state registry lists unless the conviction was overturned.

"It could be a nightmare," Spitzer said. "People would have to go back to court, one by one, to try to get their cases reopened."

Spitzer said state legislatures could remedy this problem by passing a law declaring the conviction void for persons convicted for sodomy under state laws that the Supreme Court has now overturned.

"But the question is would they do that?" he said.

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Dating may need more than just speed

SPEED DATING, continued from Page 33

noisy banter. Todd No. 11 told me he was 23, typically wakes up around noon with a hangover, then has coffee and a Red Bull, followed by shopping and meeting friends for a few beers.

I politely smiled and nodded as I discretely circled the N on my score sheet.

DING! DING! DING! We all shifted one chair, and round two began. Even if the second guy hadn't been 58 years old (I'm 37) with a poorly installed hair weave (bar light is not as forgiving as one would hope), I did not want to commute 120 miles to go bowling with him.

It's amazing how slowly three minutes can pass. DING! DING! DING!

The first men I spoke with became a blur of hometowns and occupations, hobbies and histories. They seemed nice, but none truly attracted me.

It made me think about how I judge others. Was I shallow? And if I did feel some attraction under these contrived conditions, should I expect fireworks or only hope for minimal awkwardness?

I was also a little confused, because I'd always sympathetically befriended the lonely kid on the playground and didn't want to give a Y to someone just because they seemed lonely.

But taking a swig of Bud, I set aside my codependence and reasserted my strategy to only issue Y's to people with whom I felt a real connection. The decision was made easier by the fact that most of my dates were unquestionably N material.

MY EIGHTH DATE WAS WITH MIKE NO. 17, a cutie wearing flip-flops. He was 12 years younger, waited tables and shared an apartment with five friends, but at least we both liked to swim and he lived near my place.

Good enough for me! I waved goodbye to my strict "quality versus quantity" standards and handed out my first Y.

My next 10 dates were a mélange of strangeness, awkwardness and mismatched-ness.

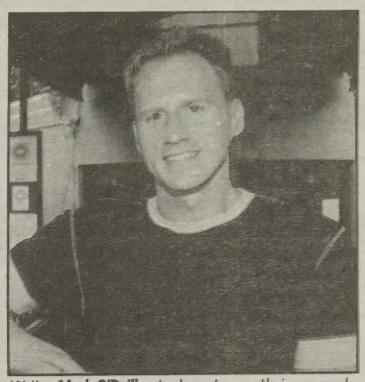
One of my last dates was with Robert No. 33, an exotic Antonio Banderas lookalike from New York City. He said he was a dental assistant.

I must have been nervous, because I interrupted, giddy and buffoon-like.

"So you are a dental hygienist!? Wow, that would be a great trait to have in a boyfriend."

I opened my mouth and pointed at a molar. Robert stared at me. It's amazing how slowly three minutes can pass.

As the evening wrapped up, we were allowed to sit wherever we wanted in order to meet one more guy.



Writer **Mark O'Reilley** took part recently in a speed-dating event that resulted in valuable lessons — but no romance. (Photo by Luis Gomez)

I decided to chat with a friendly looking guy named Larry No. 41. We enjoyed an easy, casual conversation, and I gave Larry an F for Friends.

Ultimately, I gave Y's to Flip Flops Mike and New York City guy (hoping he'd find my nervousness charming) and an F to Larry.

A friend I met early in the evening fared no better.

APPARENTLY, SPEED DATING MIGHT not be so effective after all. In a way, I wished I had given out more F's just to see who liked me, but the more I thought about it, the less I wanted to know who rejected me.

As I expected, Larry wanted to be friends with me, too. And it came as no big shock that after seeing me with my fingers in my mouth, Hot New York City guy gave me an N.

But the good news was that Flip Flops gave me a mutual Y. I sent him an e-mail with my phone number. He never wrote back.

In the end, nothing romantic came of my speed dating. I did discover that I am probably a little more shallow than I like to admit since I didn't give the "non-cuties" much of a chance. And I'm surprised how fragile my ego can be.

And even though it was fun, I can't help but think despite our Palm Pilots, Day-Timers and cell phones, maybe romance can't be orchestrated to meet our personal time tables.

Maybe there has to be some magic.

MORE INFO

Speed dating services

www.gay.hurrydate.com
www.loveontherun.com
www.minutematches.com
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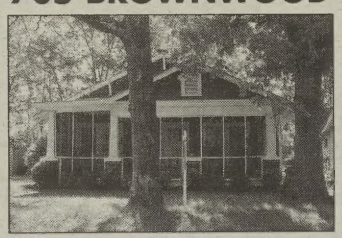

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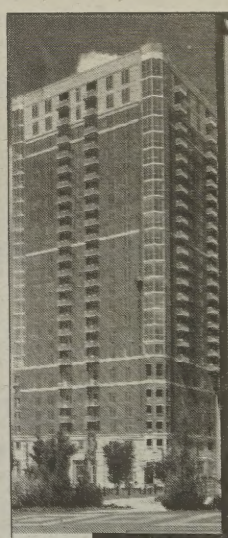

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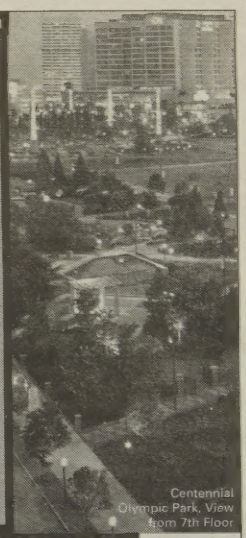

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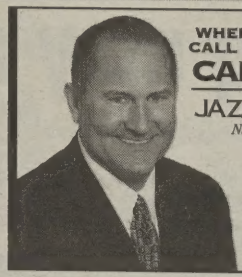

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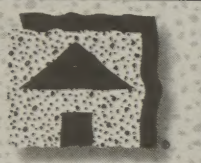

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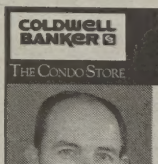

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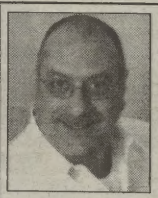

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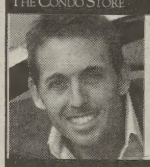

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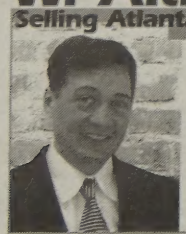

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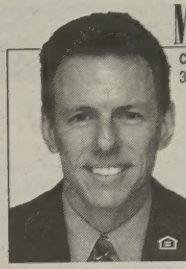

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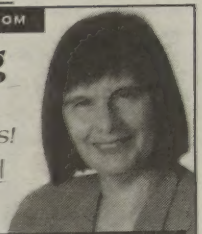

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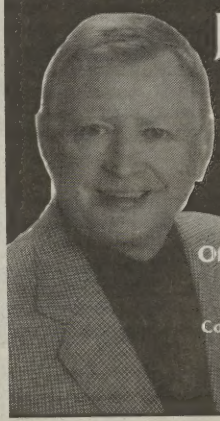

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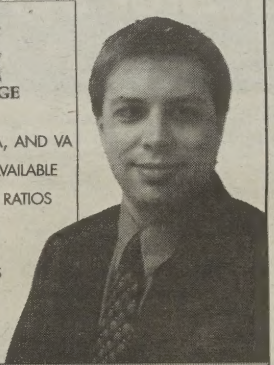

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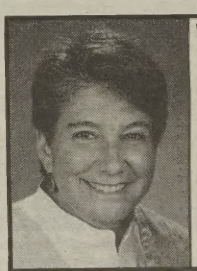

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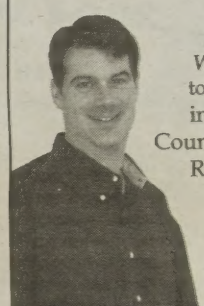

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continued from page 38

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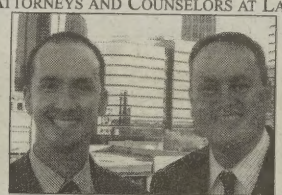

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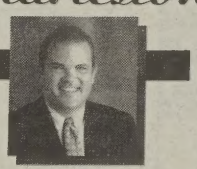

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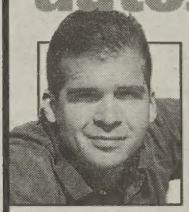


Forget power bars. Fresh crop of **muscle cars** are a sure way to beef up commutes of any length.

Fast and furious

THIS SUMMER'S "2 FAST 2 FURIOUS" strikes a chord with gay guys or gals who want a tiger in their tank. Sure, street-tough Paul Walker and company know how to strut their stuff. But the movie's real stars are the cars.

And isn't that the way it should be? Why waste hours in the gym when a muscle car can ratchet up the ol' butch points in no time flat?

Afraid of losing touch with your practical side — as in, where to put the groceries, the dog, the golf clubs, or your latest mother-in-law?

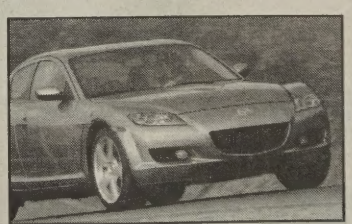
Fear not, all you Hercules and Xena wannabes. Today's chariots of fire — usually outfitted with antilock brakes and side airbags — come in all shapes and sizes, from mid-sized sedans to station wagons and trucks.

Mazda RX-8 coupe

Price: $28,300
Mpg: 20
Fast: 0-60 in 5.9 seconds
Furious: 210-horsepower V6 (automatic), or 250-hp high-performance V6 (6-speed manual)

It looks like a sports coupe. It feels like a sports coupe. But the RX-8 has four doors and a usable backseat. The base model is a bargain compared with close-competitor Nissan 350Z, which costs up to $34,200 with no rear seating.

But throw in some options (foglights, xenon headlights, stability/traction control, 18-inch wheels, sunroof, Bose audio), and — like Enron stock — that RX-8 price gain evaporates. Still, the RX-8's light-as-a-feather ride offsets the Z's stiff, butt-numbing suspension.



Mazda RX-8

Dodge Neon SRT-4 sedan

Price: $19,900
Mpg: 26
Fast: 0-60 mph in 5.6 seconds
Furious: 215-horsepower, turbocharged 4-cylinder (5-speed manual)

Dodge Neon

Best known as a standard rental car, all 2003 Neons get a much-needed facelift, including snarling snout and raised rear-end. Alas, the interior is still stuck in the early 1990s.

But all is forgiven with the SRT-4 model. Its explosive engine is second only to the Viper in the Dodge line-up. With 17-inch wheels, rear spoiler, power doors/windows/locks and other standard fare, this subcompact is a helluva lot of fun.

It's also the fastest car under $20,000.

Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution sedan

Price: $29,500
Mpg: 22
Fast: 0-60 mph in 5.1 seconds
Furious: 271-hosepower, turbo 4-cylinder (5-speed manual)

Flared fenders, aggressive stance, and an engine growl-that sounds like Harvey Fierstein, this sedan screams hormone overload.

Thoroughly adept through curves, the Evolution can easily tackle side streets in rush hour or keep up with that hottie driving in front of you.

Form-fitting Recaro seats, faux-metal dash, quiet interior and taut brakes make traffic jams a pleasure, not a curse. Only 6,000 will be built the first year, so order now or expect the same odds as getting into a Cher farewell concert.

Only options: sunroof, rear "wing."

Subaru Impreza WRX STi sedan

Price: $30,600
Mpg: 21
Fast: 0-60 mph in 5.1 seconds
Furious: 300-horsepower 4-cylinder (6-speed manual)

Last month, Subaru upped the muscle-car ante with an STi version of its popular WRX sedan. The STi has 30 more horses than Mitsu's Evolution.

But both pocket rockets post the same 0-60 mph numbers (it's a shifting thing). And each has a flamboyant rear wing.

Subaru Impreza WRX-STi

Regardless, both bad-ass banshees can hold their own against pricier, six-figure exotics.

STi plusses: nimble steering, broad seats, smooth ride, easy-to-read gauges and large, sporty hood scoop.

Please see **STREET TOUGH** on Page 57

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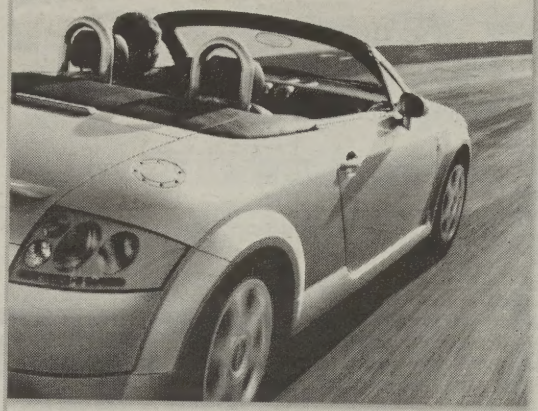

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STREET TOUGH, continued from Page 55

Audi S6 sports wagon

Price: $58,000
Mpg: 18
Fast: 0-60 mph in 6.5 seconds
Furious: 340-horsepower V8 (automatic)

Who says a midsized wagon can't be a speed demon? The blazing S6 Avant quattro is perhaps the best mix of luxury performance and practicality.

Cargo room comes in at an impressive 73.2 cubic feet with folded rear seats. Luxo features include 12-way power/heated/leather sport seats, dual climate control, stop-on-a-dime braking, stability control, head-curtain airbags and Bose audio with subwoofer.

Options can include heated rear seats, rear side airbags, manual sunshades and a solar sunroof that activates fans to cool the inside.

What, no icemaker?

Porsche Cayenne SUV

Price: $56,700-$96,000
Mpg: 15
Fast: 0-60 mph in 7 seconds (S model); 5.6 seconds (turbo)
Furious: 340-horsepower V8 (S model) or 450 horsepower turbocharged V8 (Both are 6-speed automatics; a manual S is due soon.)

This SUV is ripped, toned, and — at almost 100 Gs for the turbo — enough to give your wallet a workout. But then these are buff Porsche powerplants.

There's also leather seating, 350-watt/14-spearker sound system, trip computer, superb braking, high towing capacity (7,700 lbs.), stability control, head airbags, steering-wheel audio controls, full-time 4-wheel drive and — most important — the cachet of a Porsche emblem on the hood.

Along with 110 extra horsepower, the turbo has air suspension to raise or lower the vehicle.

Ford F-150 SVT Lightning pickup truck

Price: $33,600
Mpg: 14
Fast: 0-60 in 5.2 seconds
Furious: 380-horsepower V8 (automatic)

Remember that truck in "Twister" getting sucked into the sky then crashing back to earth? This hot-rod-in-a-pickup can outrun anything except the wrath of my partner when I topped 100 mph on a deserted stretch of highway.

Features include firm suede seating, power everything, heated/turn-signal mirrors, brushed aluminum door handles, leather-wrapped steering wheel and in-dash CD changer. If only Dorothy could have had a Lightning — she could have driven back to Kansas in no time.

Royal
Atlanta's Only Intown Subaru Dealer

LIFETIME OIL AND FILTER CHANGES*
*WITH PURCHASE OF VEHICLE

SAVE THOUSANDS OVER NEW!
SUBARU PROGRAM CARS

2002 Subaru Outback Wagon #A0464 $18,488	2001 Subaru Forester S #P0519 $15,988	2002 Subaru Outback Wagon #A0467 $17,988	2002 Subaru WRX Sedan Auto #A0531 $20,988	2002 Subaru Impreza Outback Wgn. #P0470 $16,988
2002 Subaru WRX Wagon Auto #A0532 $20,488	2003 Subaru Baja #A0533 $20,988	2003 Subaru Outback Wagon #A0536 $19,988	2002 Subaru Forester L #A0499 $18,488	2002 Subaru Forester L #A0501 $18,488

SPECIAL PURCHASE UNITS

2002 Isuzu Axiom #20348 $18,988	2002 Isuzu Rodeo SPT #20341 $15,988	2002 Isuzu Rodeo S #20309 $16,988	2002 Isuzu Rodeo LS #20312 $16,988	2002 Isuzu Rodeo LS #20320 $17,988

SELECT PREOWNED VEHICLES

2001 Ford Ranger Ext #30279A $14,988	2000 Jeep Grd. Cher Lmtd. V-8 4x4 #A0468A $18,988	2002 Mitsubishi Galant Es #P0492 $11,988	2003 Honda Civic Coupe #20823A $13,988	2002 Mercury Sable GS #A0522 $12,988

* Sales tax, tag, title additional. Subject to prior sale. Must take delivery out of dealer stock by 7/31/03.

Church St. / Royal Subaru / Scott Blvd.

Royal SUBARU DRIVEN BY WHAT'S INSIDE™

1580 Church Street-www.driveroyalsubaru.com
Mon - Fri 9am - 8pm/Sat. 9am - 7pm
404.296.9100

CLASSIFIEDS

Deadline to place a classified ad for Friday's publication is Monday at 5:30 p.m.

REAL ESTATE SERVICES

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL Come buy in the "Land of Sunshine". From the top producer, #1 gay realtor in the area. Let my 15yrs of experience work for you. #8 agent in state of FL in 2002. Dan O'Flaherty (954) 396-5965.

FABULOUS HOMES ITP!
✔Grant Park
✔East Atlanta
✔Ormewood
✔All intown areas
All price ranges. Visit our website & take the tour!
www.McKayTeam.com or (404) 314-7568.

SALE / FULTON

CLAIRMONT TERRACE (2805 NE Expressway, Unit B-8, Atl, GA 30345) 1 BR, 1 BA condo in French Provencal brick bldg. Conveniently located inside I-285. Home warranty incl w/ purchase of this condo. $79,900! Virtual tour @ www.opendoorhomes.com. Owner/agent William Flanagan CENTURY 21 GOLD MEDAL REALTY (770) 621-9009 x317 or (404) 223-6747.
MLS#: 01310164/771227.

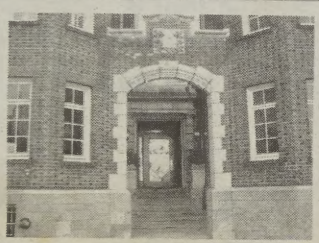
DOWNTOWN
$2,000 CASH @ CLOSING
0 down, pre-foreclosure. Lux condo, 2 BR, 2BA, gym, pool, 24-hr door man. Asking $189,500. Appraised value $205,000. (770) 682-8116.

GRANT PARK / CITY PARK PLACE Located in Atlanta's historic Grant Park community! Offers craftsman style 3 BR, 2 & 2.5 BA Ranch/Bungalow & 2 story style homes. Features incl:
✔Lrg wooded lots
✔Open flr plans w/ vaulted ceilings
✔Designer kits
✔Formal Dining Rooms
✔Hdwd flrs
✔Rocking chair front porches
Easy access to I-20, I-75 & I-85. Contact us today! Morris & Raper Realtors (404) 622-7583, www.robertburnette.com or www.morrisandraper.com.

HUGE MIDTOWN CONDO! (155 Third St) Historic charm, modern renovation. Bright, top floor, corner unit. 2 BR, 1 BA w/ sun rm, breakfast rm, hdwd flrs, crown molding, 9' ceilings, reserved/secure OSP. Walk to all Midtown offers! $239,000. Brian @ RE/MAX Intown (404) 422-6050 Tour at www.realtorfrasier.com.

INMAN PARK OPEN Sat 12-3pm & Sun 3-5pm. (764 Edgewood Ave) Just listed! 9 Historic first class homes! Hdwds, granite countertops, tiled baths, stainless steel appls. 1 car garage, WD. Hurry, pick your own colors! Starting at $154,900. Highland to L on Elizabeth to R on Edgewood.
THE MINICH TEAM RE/MAX EXECS. (404) 292-7800.

MIDTOWN LOFT (805 Peachtree) 1 BR w/ office. Ralph Lauren paint & hdwds.Priced to sell $235,000. Call, (404) 879-0306. drheym@cs.com



MIDTOWN Turn of the century home. Banquet sized DR, Mahogany walls, hdwds, sun rm, gated prkg, $300's. THE MINICH TEAM RE/MAX EXECS. (404) 292-7800.

PRIDE REALTY PROPERTIES FOR SALE:
✔BUCKHEAD - TERRACES AT PEACHTREE CONDO; (1 Biscayne Dr, 30309.)
1 BR / 1.5 BA Buckhead condo. Many upgrades. $149,900.
✔MIDTOWN - McGILL PARK (911 Mcgill Prk Ave 30312) $147,000. 2 BR, 1 BA, vaulted ceiling, fpl, huge balc, WD incld.
✔STONE MOUNTAIN HOME (5151 Salem Dr.) 3 BR, 2.5 BA, fpl, deck, 2-car garage, close to all! $134,900.
PRIDE REALTY (404) 352-5570 / (800) 597-7356.
www.PrideRealty.com

VIRGINIA HIGHLAND BUNGALOW 944 Los Angeles Ave, NE. Attractive 1929 Bungalow in the heart of VH neighborhood. Walk to many restaurants, shops & parks. Lots of light, hdwd flrs, crown molding, front porch w/ swing. Lrg, priv, fenced back yard. 2/2 w/ LR, DR, kit, den on main, 1/1 bsmt. Perfect roommate/office setup. $369,000. By owner. Agents protected. (404) 892-8345.

SALE / DEKALB

BROWNWOOD PARK ATLANTA Great 1930s bungalow w/ modern updates. 2 BRs, 2 BAs, formal living, sep dining, family rm w/ fpl, screened porch & deck in back. 1 car garage & storage bldg. Property backs up to the park. $282,000. Call Ken Carroll, C-21 Gold Medal Realty; (404) 246-2922 / (404) 377-0116 ext 2327.

CITY OF DECATUR condo only (1231-A Church St). Totally renov 2BR, 1.5 BA by city park & walking distance to downtown. Mins to Emory/CDC. Low association fee. $122,900. RE/MAX Intown (404)422-6050 www.realtorfrasier.com.

DECATUR / AVONDALE ESTATES (3667 Kensington Rd) $172,500. 2 BR, 2 BA, great brick re-do. Updated kit. Across from Kensington MARTA Station. Lee Porter, Re/Max Greater Atlanta (770) 291-0100.

DEKALB UNIQUE UPDATED 3 BR, 2 BA + huge bonus RM, contemp, open flr plan, hdwds, vaulted ceilings, gas fpl, multi decks, lrg wooded fenced yard, mins to I-85, Emory, Brookhaven, MARTA. Open house Sun. $229k. (404) 325-1041. Web pics at: http://mywebpages.comcast.net/3dstudio/hfw.htm

LAKESIDE SUNSETS IN-TOWN! Rare opportunity for a setting like this. Lrg all brick 3/2 + 1/1 rental over 2 car garage. Formal LR, sep DR, 2 family rooms, fpl, screen porch. Only 235,000. Eastlake area w/ no city taxes. RE/MAX INTOWN ML TAYLOR (404) 257-4926.

RENTAL SERVICES

PRIDE REALTY RENTALS A current list of the most desirable living addresses in Atlanta.
✔CENTENNIAL PARK WEST Huge 1 BR PALACES all new, concierge, pool, gym, garage, WD, balc & many extras. $950/mo & up.
✔CORNERSTONE VILLAGE LOFTS (800 Peachtree / 6th St, 30309) 1 BR, 1 BA, hdwds, WD, many upgrades. $1,095/mo.
✔BEAUTIFUL EAST ATLANTA HOME (1549 Newton Ave, 30316) 3 BR, 1 BA, hdwds, porch, WD, unfinished bsmt, many upgrades. $1,095/mo.
✔LAWRENCEVILLE HOME (1006 Yellow River Dr, 30043) 3 BR, 2 BA, hdwds, fenced yrd, 2-car garage, fpl, WD, great location!
✔McGILL PARK (McGill Prk Ave, 30312)
1 BR w/loft $995/mo / 2 BR, 1 BA garden, fpl, balc. $1,195/mo.
✔MUSEUM TOWER 1 BR, 1 BA, all new, pool, fitness center, garage. $1,095/mo.
✔SIENA (220 Renaissance Pkwy) 2 BR, 2.5 BA duplex. Hdwds, 2 fpls, WD, covered prkg, many upgrades. $1,295/mo.
✔SOUTH EAST ATLANTA HOME (77 Springside Dr, 30354) Oversized 2 BR, ranch. $750/mo.
✔13TH ST / PIEDMONT AVE HIGHRISE 1 BR, balc, garage, WD. $915/mo.
✔TERRACES AT PEACHTREE (1 Biscayne Dr 30309) 1 BR, 1.5 BA, many upgrades. $995/mo.
Proudly committed to our Atlanta community. **WE ARE A NO FEE SERVICE.** TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR PROPERTY!
www.PrideRealty.rentals.com (404) 352-5570 / (800) 597-7356. **Now hiring leasing agents - Call in confidence.

GARY S. CHAD / 14 West Realty / 404-874-6357 x 207. Preview all our properties on our website: property-consultants.com
Houses for Rent:
✔CANDLER PARK - 1.5 story cottage, 3 BR, 2 BA, music rm, french doors to tiered deck. $1,900/mo.
✔EMORY / DRUID HILLS - Charming cottage, 3 BR, 2 BA, renov kit open to family rm, deck, quiet setting, $1,650/mo.
✔MIDTOWN - Renovated bungalow, 2 BR, 2 BA, music rm, DR, fpl, garage, $1,600/mo.
✔MORNINGSIDE - Small 2 BR, 1 BA, LR, lrg screen porch, quiet st, $1,100/mo.
✔MORNINGSIDE - Grand Spanish stucco w/tile roof, 3 BR (master suite), 2 BA, DR, office, wading pool, 2-car open garage, $2,500/mo. ✔PINE HILLS - Cottage, 2 BR, 1 BA, sep DR, den, lrg fenced backyard, quiet st, $1,250/mo.
✔TOCO HILLS - Brick ranch, 2 BR, 1.5 BA, den/office, lower lvl, drive-in garage, $1,000/mo.
✔PONCEY / HIGHLANDS - Brick bungalow, 3 BR, 2 BA, sep DR, fpl, lrg kit, big rms, $1,600/mo.
❖VIRGINIA / HIGHLAND - Completely renov, 2 BR, 2 BA, den, garage, screen porch, priv & fenced backyard. $2,100/mo.

Robin Cahall / 14 West Realty / 404-874-6357 x 226. Preview all our properties on our website: property-consultants.com
Apartments for Rent:
✔INMAN PARK - FREE MONTHS RENT! 2 BR, 1 BA, hdwd flrs, 1st flr unit, walk to Inman Marta Station. $775/mo.
✔INMAN PARK - Historic bldg, spacious 3 BR, 2 BA, high ceilings, hdwd flrs, all big rms, swimming pool. $1,500/mo.
✔INMAN PARK - FREE MONTHS RENT! 1 BR, 1 BA, hdwd flrs, 2nd flr unit, walk to Inman Marta Station. $600/mo.
✔MIDTOWN - FREE MONTHS RENT! 1 BR, 1 BA, 2nd flr unit in 4 unit bldg, hdwd flrs, plenty of closet space, eat-in kit, $625/mo.
✔MIDTOWN - FREE MONTHS RENT! Lrg 1 BR, 1 BA, 4 unit bldg, hdwd flrs, plenty of closet space, eat-in kit, $700/mo.
✔PONCEY / HIGHLANDS - Lrg studio apt over garage, storage avail, $575/mo.
✔PONCEY / HIGHLANDS - Lrg attic apt, 1-2 BR, 1 BA, lrg kit, distinct alcove spaces, $775/mo.
Condos/Townhomes for Rent:
✔EMORY / BRIARCLIFF - Renov 2BR, 1 BA, LR/DR, upscale kit, deck, hdwd flrs. $900/mo.

The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of ETHAN GREEN

by Eric Orner

A very reluctant Ethan is on his way to a party where apparently, he is going to meet Peter's family.
Guess Who's Coming to Dinner
Part 1
So, This is a whole A Birthday Party? And I've got no presents! Iv YI YI Peter, really hold on. We've gotta STOP THE TRUCK!! I didn't bring an outfit for a Meet The Family surprise onslaught. None of these shirts work... Hev! Is thatta mall? Maybe there's a Banana R
ETHAN, YOU LOOK GREAT.
Relax. You're totally stylin'... Y'know, for a dude who's wrinkled all his shirts and's got no pants on.
Why don't you climb back up here and try n'chill. It's not a birthday party--You don't need a present, an' you look handsome as can be.
So waitaminute your saying my outfit's wrinkled?
So, You're out to your family right?
Hell Yeah.
But they don't know we're sleeping together?
Ethan we only been sleeping together for a weekend.
Y'mean you don't keep your mama apprised of whatever orgasms you might be having with random houseguests?
WHAa.?
Whoa.. Just Kidding. Jeez, WHO'S not relaxed now?
I don't even have flowers...
She'll be glad to meet you---She's gonna get too many flowers anyway.. I know this's was a lot to ask. An' I ambushed you in to it.. But I'm really glad to be taking you.
You okay guy?
A little nervous to tell you the truth.
Ain't a thing to be nervous about.
GAYLE FORCE PHYLLIS
FILMORE
YOU GO GAYLE
I'll keep that in mind.

CLASSIFIEDS

RENT / COBB

KENNESAW Very nice, priv 3 BR, 2 BA w/ yard, WD, all new appls, hdwds, jacuzzi, sunroom, CATV. $900/mo + some utils, security & pet deposit. (770) 516-3528.

RENT / GWINNETT

P'TREE INDUS / NORCROSS Share 2 BR, 2 BA condo w/ GWF. Close to I-285 & 85. DR, fpl, WD, DW, CB, hsi, sep phone, patio, pool, tennis. $500/mo + 1/2 utils. Dep req'd. (770) 355-8080.

RENT / FULTON

ATLANTA RENTALS Pride Realty. Ansley/Midtown. Specializing in Metro Atlanta.
✔Studio $499/mo & up (Midtown).
✔1 BR $575/mo & up (Midtown).
✔2 BR, 2 BA garden prime location! $839/mo & up.
✔2 BR, 1.5 BA townhouse $909/mo. $300 off 1st mo!!
✔3 BR APTS from $1,079/mo & up. (Metro Atlanta)
✔BUCKHEAD PENTHOUSE HUGE 3 BR, 2 BA, WD, pool, garage, fitness center, concierge, spectacular view! $1,659/mo.
www.PrideRealty.rentals.com. Take PRIDE in your property. **WE ARE A NO FEE SERVICE. (404) 352-5570 or (800) 597-7356.** **Now hiring leasing agents - Call in confidence.

ATLANTA, 2/1, CUTE, clean, hdwd flrs, lrg yard, priv fence, pets Ok, quiet neighborhood. $875/mo nego, (404) 285-4836. See
photos: house.50megs.com

COLLEGE PARK Historic area GM seeks GM to shr 3 BR home. Split lvl, priv. BR & BA, fully furn. Incl: utils, weekly maid, TV, linens. $540/mo, sec dep required. (404) 762 9818

EAST POINT CHARMING 3/1 home in exclusive Jefferson Heights of East Point. Sep LR & DR w/arched doorway, hdwd flrs & recently renov w/ nice backyard. Call Gail, (770) 719-0056 / (404) 822-0402.

GREAT VALUE $750/mo for 2/1. (404) 822-6454. www.rentintown.com/grant.htm. Grant Park Quad, OSP, new hdwd flrs. Pets OK! New kit & BA. Walk to train, very nice.

LUXURY MIDTOWN RENTAL
1. 825 Argonne Ave - 4 level TH, 3 BR, 2.5 BA, 4 porches, immaculate renovation, top of line kit, $2,400/mo
2. 800 Peachtree St #208, Cornerstone Manor House - 1 BR, 1 BA condo overlooking Peachtree, hdwds, granite, open flr plan, $1,200/mo
3. 197 Fifth St - TH w/ rooftop terrace, 2 BR, 2 full BA/2 half BA, 2 car garage, fpl, great location, $1,750/mo
4. 1101 Juniper St #311, Park Central Condo - 2 BR, 2 BA, skyline view, roommate flr plan, great amenities, $1,300/mo
5. 205 Third St #4, The Bennett - 2 BR, 1 BA, vaulted 20 ft ceilings, skylights, $1,300/mo
6. 800 Peachtree St #1216, Cornerstone Village - 2 BR, 2 BA loftominium, open flr plan, hdwds, California closets, $1,300/mo
(404) 874-6296 or www.RandalandDavid.com.
Atlanta Intown Real Estate Services

MIDTOWN Lrg 1 BR w/ hdwd flrs, tile kit & BA, OSP, laundry, walk to park. $725/mo (770) 649-0078 ext 2.

MIDTOWN New 1 BR ground flr apt, gated community, priv patio & entrance. Above Red Chair w/ Midtown view. 1 yr lease. 1st, last, security. No pets/smoking. $975/mo incl utils & CATV. Avail 7/15. (404) 872-3555.

MIDTOWN Priv 1 BR carriage house w/ hdwd flrs & balcony, 6 blks to park. $525/mo. (404) 409-2734.

MORNINGSIDE 2 BR, 2 BA, hdwd flrs, tile kit & BA, deck, OSP, laundry, walk to park. $1,100/mo (770) 649-0078 ext 2.

PLUSH MIDTOWN HIGHRISE
Mayfair Bldg, 20th flr, awesome Skyline View, Near Park. 12/mo. $1,350/mo. Internet, water, trash, incl. Serious inquires only. (404) 256-9362, lv msg.

PRIDE REALTY METRO ATLANTA LOFTS. Great secured Midtown locations.
✔1 BRs from $650/mo & up.
✔2 BRs from $799/mo & up.
www.PrideRealty.rentals.com
(404) 352-5570 / (800) 597-7356. WE ARE A NO FEE SERVICE. Proud sponsor of "Project Open Hand Atlanta"

RENT / DEKALB

DECATUR / CLARKSTON 2 BR, 1 BA bottom flr unit in house. Off East Ponce, near 285. Prof, NS, pets Ok! $600/mo + dep (404) 296-0748.

EMORY / BRIARCLIFF (1840 Mt Royal Dr) Lrg 2 BR, 2 BA on quiet cul-de-sac. Very light, bright & open w/ hdwd flrs, fpl, lrg deck, fenced yard. Pets OK. $1,350/mo. ML Taylor (404) 257-4926.

I-85N & I-285 / TUCKER Shr house w/ 2 others. BR w/ priv BA. NS, no drugs. $385/mo incl utils. Avail immediately! (770) 723-0112. Refs required.

KIRKWOOD (2202 Hosea Williams Dr) 2 BR, 2 BA bungalow. Spectacular renovation, 2 car garage, electronic gate, fenced yard. $1,250/mo. (404) 874-6296 or www.RandalandDavid.com. Atlanta Intown Real Estate Services.

KIRKWOOD LEASE PURCHASE Option beauty completely remodeled: 3/2, master w/jetted tub & fpl. All hdwds, LR & DR each w/fpl. Granite countertops & black appls in kit. Vict full front porch on quite st. Call Gail, (770) 719-1157 or (404) 822-0402. Visit: www.colemanland.net

NORTH LAKE / CHAMBLEE TUCKER 2 BR, 1 BA condo. Hdwd flrs, bricked priv porch, pool, tiled LR/DR, alarm. $720/mo. (770) 938-5790 / (770) 939-1606.

NORTHLAKE / BRIARCLIFF 3 BR, 2 BA duplex on 2 acres. 10 mins Midtown. Tile/hdwds, open family/kit. NS/pets. 1 yr. $975/mo. (404) 633-7850.

RENT / EVENT SPACE

FORUM AT DEFOOR CENTRE An intimate, artistic setting for events; 30' ceilings, large performance stage; accommodates 500 standing, 150 seated; 5 mins from Buckhead, Midtown, Downtown. Contact Shelly Crump, Event Sales Manager (404) 591-3903.

RENT / ELSEWHERE

DOUGLASVILLE Lrg 1 BR apt overlooking priv lake. $700/mo utils incl. (404) 538-7363

SHARE / FULTON

EAST POINT Shr 3 BR home w/ GBM, 40s, smoker; seeks 2 mature/discreet boarders. No party animals/druggies. Live w/ 2 clean gentle Boxers in nice area. $475/mo, shr utils. (404) 376-7106.

L5P / INMAN Park. PGWM seeks RM for 2 BR, 2.5 BA TH, WD, gated complex, garage. $600/mo + 1/2 utils. (404) 668-2921.

LENOX / CHESHIRE BRIDGE RD GWM seeks GM to shr 2 BR, 2 BA apt. $400/mo + $200 dep & 1/2 utils. (404) 841-0445 / (404) 798-6550.

M/F FOR 2 BR apt. CAC/heat, laundry in unit. $425/mo + dep. Excludes utils. 4 blks from Piedmont Park. Own phone. Clean, responsible, employed. (404) 607-8345, lv msg.

MIDTOWN / HIGHLANDS GWM seeks dog friendly roommate to share 2 BR, 2 BA loft. T1, balc, pool, gated community. $575/mo + 1/2 utils. (404) 272-5400 or ajones@mindspring.com.

MIDTOWN 2 BR, CAC, 2 blks to park, off-street prkg, hdwd flrs. $525/mo. (404) 409-2734 or (678) 508-2775.

COMMITMENT CEREMONIES

ANNOUNCE YOUR UNION Southern Voice is proud to announce the addition of a "Commitment Ceremonies" category to our Classified listings. When making arrangements for your Union, don't forget to include the most important aspect of all...announcing the date. Publishing your union is easy & simple. Call (877) 863-1885 ext 223 to put the finishing touches on your ceremony.

ARTISTIC INVITES Unique & colorful wedding/commitment invitations for the couple seeking to express their individuality. Please visit my website
www.nicolerivera.com.

www.weddingbellz.com Beautiful Victorian chapel/retreat center, accepting reservations for commitment ceremonies, weddings, renew vows. Overnight accommodations w/ breakfast. Singles, couples, small groups. 30 mins North of Perimeter. Smoke-free adult environment. Call (678) 947-5002. E-mail: Meshad@aol.com

VIDEOGRAPHY For commitment ceremonies & weddings. Call (770) 636-2222 or e-mail
videofreelancer@earthlink.net for more info.

LIFE PARTNER COMMITMENT CEREMONIES performed by like-minded minister. Call Reverend Angelia Hall (770) 942-9744. Ask about small ceremony packages.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUR COMMON WELFARE will provide free HIV testing & counseling. testing using oral fluids & urine test; daily 9am-7pm & Sat 9am-1pm.. Located at 4329 Memorial Dr, Suite H; Decatur (next to Dekalb Co jail). Call (404) 296-3090 for details.

ADOPTING? Want to take classes you need w/ others who are, but can't find any specific to the needs of future parents like you ? Come to Solutions For Family Education. We specialize in newborn care, intl toddler care, pediatric CPR & home safety. Call Lori (770) 475-1260 or
www.solutionsforfamilyeducation.com.

EMPLOYMENT

EDITOR Houston Voice, the leading GLBT publication in Houston, Texas, seeks experienced journalist to lead its editing team. Ideal candidate will be highly organized & have excellent writing & editing skills. Competitive pay & benefits, generous vacation package. Reply via e-mail to: ccrain@washblade.com.

JOIN THE BEST TEAM IN TOWN! Outwrite looking to hire PT Salesperson. Retail experience reqd, book knowledge helpful. Apply in person @ 991 Piedmont Ave.

PROFESSIONAL LIMOUSINE CHAUFFEUR Qualifications: Squeaky clean driving record - no DUI, points or criminal arrests, on-time, positive attitude, well groomed, honest & dependable, vehicle clean & stocked, accurate record-keeping/reports, flexible & avail on short notice 7 days. Send resume & letter of interest to: Chauffeur Ad 2003, PO Box 54473, Atlanta GA 30308.

PROMAID A national trade magazine is seeking an aggressive, self-motivated person to work as an independent advertising sales person. Work FT or PT. Generous commissions paid. E-mail or fax resume to PROmaid@pmaa.us, (404) 475-6244 or call (404) 475-6243 for more info.

WRITE YOUR OWN PAYCHECK! We have an immediate opening for a clean-cut, well spoken & energetic person to manager our downtown automotive detailing facility. Must posses a valid drivers licence & be able to supply refs. Salary is based on experience & motivation. Call (404) 456-2626.

DOMESTIC HELP

HANDY HOUSE BOY Can do almost anything! Day/week/long term; creative, cute, dependable, fast, friendly & reasonable. Make a list & call Michael @ (404) 391-9427.

POSITIONS WANTED

DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME? Professional, personal assistant/concierge. We'll run errands & give you more time in your day. Insured & bonded. Ms. Burnette, (770) 912-7021.

SERVICES REQUESTED Bi-weekly residential cleaning. Occasional dog sitting. Riverside/Sandy Springs area. (404) 497-0801.

VOLUNTEERS

ATLANTA HARM REDUCTION CENTER is a grassroots street outreach program whose focus is to stop the spread of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, by providing info, condoms, referrals & more to the people who are the underserved in our communities. VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED! Please donate some of your time & energy. For more info write to: AHRC; 1020 DeKalb Ave NE, suite 17; Atl GA 30307 or call (404) 526-9222. Email us Ahraatlanta@juno.com.

INSTRUCTION

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TRAVEL / U.S.A.

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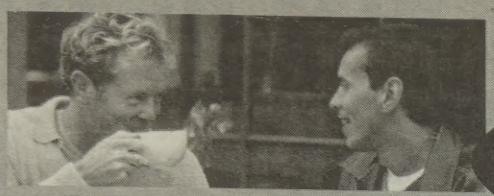

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SBM, 32, 5'11", 163lbs, medium build, hardworking laid-back, seeks down-to-earth, easygoing, intelligent, professional SBM, 30-45, HIV-, for friendship and more. Atlanta ☎451573

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SBPM, 33, 6'1", 190lbs, mustache, goatee, Virgo, N/S, seeks BPM, 27-39, N/S, for conversation and more. ☎515611

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GWM, 31, enjoys reading, movies, dining out, travel, sports. Seeking GM, with similar interests, for dating and more. Serious inquiries only. Apo ☎502864

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SM, 19, employed, loving, fun, seeks outgoing, fun, spirited man who enjoys travel, clubbing, dining, movies, camping and life. ☎517353

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SWM, 26, 6', 200lbs, Capricorn, smoker, seeks man, 21-38, for possible LTR. Big Canoe ☎432407

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SBM, 32, 5'8", 240lbs, with a large build, is interested in meeting a WM, with a husky build, for friendship and more. Norcross ☎446778

TRY ME
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SM, 34, 5'7", 165lbs, brown/brown, father of two, in search of a male who is ready to settle down. Atlanta ☎407465

COP AND A GENTLEMAN
SBM, 44, 6'1", 216lbs, athletic build, short black/brown (sometimes wears glasses), sincere, caring, easygoing, Taurus, N/S, enjoys cooking, plays. Seeking kind, sensitive, homebody type, 20-42. Macon ☎509684

SHAKE THAT BODY FOR ME
SWM, 54, 5'10", 210lbs, blue eyes, hairy chest, with tan, Libra, N/S, seeks man, 22-65, gym type, smooth body a plus. Douglasville ☎512737

I BRAKE FOR RINKS
SBM, 19, long black/hazel, caramel complexion, Pisces, N/S, enjoys skating and the Underground. Seeking BM, 18-25, N/S, in Atlanta area. ☎515414

LET'S MEET!
SM, 24, in search of a masculine man, 18-35, for friendship or not. Let's talk, see if we hit it off! Smyrna ☎478330

LET'S START BY MEETING!
GWM, 22, 6'4", 220lbs, brown/hazel, looking for a male, 21-28, for friendship first. If you're interested, leave me a message! East Cobb Station ☎482642

ACTIVE IN SPORTS
SM, 21, in search of a muscular male, 18-25, for whatever happens! Give me a call, take a chance! Atlanta ☎493019

CALL ME
SM, 18, 6'2", brown/blue, enjoys dancing, going out, and hanging out with friends. Looking for a new friend. Atlanta ☎477651

EXTRA WEIGHT? GREAT!
SBM, 47, 6', 200lbs, shaved head, mustache, goatee, husky, Gemini, N/S, seeks stocky, beefy man, 30-75, hirsute a+, top or versatile, for monogamous LTR. ☎462517

CORVETTE SUMMER
GWM, bottom, 40, smoker, 5'8", 200lbs, brown/blue, into cars, racing, outdoors, music and dogs. Looking for a top with similar interests and varied. Hairy a plus, but not a requirement. smoke/drink ok. Serious replies only. Woodstock ☎275721

LOVE AND COMPASSION
SBM, 38, is looking for a best friend, growing into more, with a wonderful man who enjoys walks, talks and more. Atlanta ☎469925

CARING SWM...
tired of being alone. SWM, 6'3", 235lbs, brown/brown, HIV-, N/D, N/S, N/Drugs, Christian daddy bear, seeks Mr. Right, 25-45, for friendship, possible LTR. Atlanta ☎959083

SEEKING A SOULMATE
GWM, 45, 5'8", 160lbs, brown/brown, moustache, HIV+, quite healthy, honest, sincere, enjoys camping, fishing, gardening, quiet times at home. ISO GWM, 40-50, with similar interests. South Metro area. Griffin ☎959082

A GOOD LOVER
SWM, 38, 5'11", medium complexion, mustache, versatile, Cancer, smoker, seeks WM, 30-42, with a kind heart. Belvedere ☎465393

SHALL WE?
Bi-racial male, 18, long black/hazel, Aries, N/S, seeks man, 18-25, N/S, Atlanta area, for friendship, fun, and dating. ☎466935

SLIGHTLY ON THE EDGE
SWM, 41, 6'1", 190lbs, diverse, well-traveled, handsome, Gemini, smoker, teaches and trains horses. Seeking similar tall, masculine B/HM, 18-45. Atlanta ☎468020

HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU
SBM, 23, 5'11", 170lbs, dark complexion, low hair cut, extremely hairy, loves the outdoors, horseback-riding, fishing, quiet times home, cuddling. Seeking SM, with good morals and a passion for life. Atlanta ☎451386

LOOKING FOR YOU
GWM, 41, 5'8", 160lbs, dark/dark, HIV+, lean, muscular build, in good health, seeks GWM, 35-50, HIV+, who works out and takes care of himself. Atlanta ☎959072

LOOK ME UP
SM, 22, 5'7", 142lbs, employed, active, seeks open-minded, honest SM, age/race open, to share good times, friendship, maybe more. ☎419631

MASCULINE, DOWN-TO-EARTH
WM, 40, 6', 190lbs, brown/brown, HIV+, healthy, likes the outdoors. Seeking someone similar for friendship and more. Atlanta ☎408321

SEEKING KINDRED SPIRIT
SM, 53, 6'2", 230lbs, brown/blue, in search of GM, 30-40, with good looks, for good times together, possible relationship. Grovania ☎406406

SENSE OF HUMOR A MUST
Light-hearted SM, 42, 6'2", 180lbs, brown hair, boy-next-door features, likes movies, reading, music, plays. Seeking male with similar interests. Atlanta ☎959035

Women Seeking Women

JUST BE HONEST...
for you never know where it will lead you. SWF, 34, Aries, N/S, seeks a true friendship with a BF, 28-43, who enjoys pool. ☎513317

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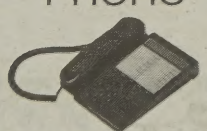

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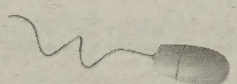

Give us your e-mail address and we'll do the rest.

LOOKING FOR ME?
Sexy, attractive SBF, 22, 5'5", 145lbs, caramel complexion, tattoos, low hair cut, enjoys a good night out. Seeking special, down-to-earth lady for park walks, talks, picnics and maybe LTR. ☎534149

WANT TO JOIN ME?
SF, 25, 5'2", 168lbs, brown complexion, well-groomed, independent, mother of 3, loves movies, shopping, parks more. Seeking very intelligent, down-to-earth similar, child friendly female, for friendship and fun times. ☎534583

SPORTY BUT FEMININE
SWPF, 47, teacher, likes hiking, working out, tennis, day trips, beaches, mountains, dining, movies. Looking for a similar woman, 38-60, for friendship, possible more. Mc Donough ☎400353

LET'S TALK!
Spiritual SF, 37, cook, enjoys reading, meditation, quiet times. Seeking like-minded, drama-free lady to share friendship and more. ☎517497

HOPELESS ROMANTIC
Female, 27, 5'3", 190lbs, long brown/hazel, loves watching football and occasional tennis, enjoys writing poems and short stories. Seeking friend, possibly more. Bloomingdale ☎959098

OUTGOING WOMAN
GBF, 18, 5'4", 160lbs, brown/brown, enjoys movies, music, quiet times, outdoors, sports. Seeking GF, with similar interests, for LTR. Atlanta ☎503248

A LOT TO OFFER
GBF, 36, 5'5", 136lbs, brown/hazel, enjoys sports, travel, the arts, reading, movies, the beach. Seeking attractive, outgoing, feminine, down-to-earth GF, with similar interests, for friendship first. Covington ☎503266

STAY SWEET!
Full-figured SWF, 29, new to Atlanta area, fun, outgoing, straight-forward, down-to-earth, independent, lives alone, seeks SW/BF, for companionship, good conversation, walks, exploring life together. D/D-free. ☎296039

NO GAME PLAYERS
SBF, 30, 5'5", 165lbs, likes shopping, movies, walks in the park, reading books, romantic dinners. Seeking outgoing SF, 27-37, who knows what she wants. Jonesboro ☎478500

SEEKS FRIENDS
SF, 44, seeks laid-back SF, who enjoys movies, dining, picnics, travel, or quiet times at home. Sound like you? ☎333712

OLDER WISER LESBIANS
Can we start a support/social group for the above in North Fulton County? Is anyone out there? If interested and would like to get involved, please call. Alpharetta ☎959093

MATURE SOPHISTICATE
BF, 55, mature sophisticate, seeks same in professional BF to share dining, movies, travel, cultural events and comfortable home life, some discretion required. Stone Mountain ☎959099

A FULL DECK
Female, 39, Aquarius, employed in communications, enjoys playing cards, movies, and parks. Seeking woman, 38-42. ☎511539

SPARE TIME BUDDY
GBF, 34, enjoys movies, reading, dining out, travel, sports, biking. Seeking GF, with similar interests, for companionship and more. Atlanta ☎341420

DRAMA FREE
Hard-working, educated stud, 33, 5', 145lbs, black/brown, D/D-free, two beautiful daughters, dimples, not into games, seeks female to spend some quality time with! Duluth ☎403879

MAKE EACH OTHER LAUGH
SBF, 32, 5'2", 145lbs, Sagittarius, N/S, college student, seeks woman, 24-45, N/S, for friendship, casual dating. Let's seize the moment! East Cobb Station ☎393939

BE MINE
Attractive, feminine, hip GWF, 29, spiritual, adventurous, loves fashion, art. Looking for love outside the box. Memorial Square ☎262497

SHORT AND SEXY
GPF, 34, enjoys movies, music, travel, working out, outdoor activities. Seeking B/HF, 28-40, with similar interests, for friendship first. Stone Mountain ☎250845

WAITING TO EXHALE
BF, 5'8", long brown/brown, of large frame, telecommunications customer service representative, loves college football, basketball, and travel. Seeking woman for committed relationship. Atlanta ☎959061

LOOKING FOR LOVE
Attractive, feminine, professional GBF, 39, enjoys concerts, plays, quiet dinners, cuddling, and occasional evenings out on the town. Seeking sincere, loving, butch GWPF with similar interests. Powder Springs ☎959135

SOUND LIKE YOU?
SF, 47, looking for a woman, 35-55, for swimming, working out, movies, concerts, and relaxation. Decatur ☎484587

GOOD COMPANY AWAITS YOU
Tall, slender, attractive GBF, with wholesome qualities, seeks the company of a like-minded spirit; somewhat conservative yet adventurous, romantic idealist, who appreciates intellectual stimulation tempered with good humor. Stone Mountain ☎488277

ALL GOOD THINGS
SBF, 41, 5'1", with a full figure, is in search of a nice lady who is willing to try anything at least one. Fairfax ☎468601

SPIRITUALLY CENTERED
Mature, straight-forward GPF, 42, enjoys simple life of quality vs. quantity, seeks same, enjoys good conversation, cultural events, reading, companionship. Friendship first and when it's meant to be, maybe more. ☎288400

LET'S TALK
Sincere SPF, 44, tall, blonde, very attractive, H/W proportionate, magnetic smile, enjoys working out, the outdoors, kayaking, beaches, fly fishing, reading, the arts. Seeking open-minded SF,with eclectic interests, for friendship/fun. Winder ☎422660

A LOT OF QUIET TIME
Soft butch, 42, athletic, seeks feminine, mature, sophisticated, professional woman, 35-55, who's lonely and desires good conversation, dates to the movies, jazz clubs, plays. Athens ☎304005

LOOK HERE
GWPF, 51, sane, solvent, spiritual, attractive, fun, athletic, vegetarian, bad violin player, but working on it, seeks friends first, wanna know more? Your turn. N/S, no drugs, no drama. Pine Lake ☎959132

SOMETHING FOR THE LADIES
Serious GBF, 20, Cancer, N/S, seeks older GBF, 21-33, to fulfill all of my dreams. Atlanta ☎432222

MY QUEST
GWF seeks same. Please be 36-44, fit, attractive, intelligent, spiritual, emotionally available. Let's meet, talk and see where it goes. Tucker ☎424315

WAITING FOR YOU
GHF, 39, Leo, N/S, enjoys movies, seeks honest, faithful, affectionate GWF, 30-48, who likes dogs, and not into drugs, for possible LTR. Moncks Corner ☎393286

SAVE THE DRAMA!
Brown-skinned woman, 45, 5'7", 186lbs, smoker, looking for a special lady, 34-41, race open, to spend time. Not looking for a lot of drama! ☎317653

READY TO SETTLE DOWN
SWPF, 42, looking for intelligent, articulate professional, 30-45, for good friendship first, maybe leading to a committed relationship. I like the outdoors, sports, music, shopping, more. Douglasville ☎278957

SLOW DANCE WITH ME
Feminine GBF, 49, seeks endless romance with aggressive woman, 30+. Let's explore the possibility for LTR and the good life. Are you willing? No fems or bi/curious. Smyrna ☎255276

SEEKING CAMARADERIE
Feminine GWPF, 32, attractive, fit, enjoys Latin culture, working out, hiking, travel, beaches, shopping, arts, adventure, thought-provoking television/conversation, spending time with my dog. Seeking new friendship with happy individual. Atlanta ☎116721

Just Friends

SEEKS FRIENDS
GBF, 42, seeks GF, 35-45, who's professional, spiritual, and feminine, for friendship. No smokers, Bi's, drugs or alcoholics. Stone Mountain ☎422721

WANTED FRIENDS
GWPF, mid-30s, seeks similar, 25-40, for friends. Enjoys arts, travel, outdoors, sports, music of all types. I enjoy watching movies at home and out, good conversations, sincerity. No drugs. ☎258934

MY PARTNER AND I...
recently relocated to Atlanta, and are seeking other females with whom to form a friendship, network, social group. Arlington ☎461866

WHITE BOTTOM BOY
WM, 20, 5'10", 165lbs, brown/green, bottom, very smooth, fit, athletic, seeks adventurous top, 18-28, who can take charge in the bedroom. Athens ☎408244

Bisexuals

SPECIAL FRIEND
Bi-curious SBF, 29, Capricorn, N/S, loves basketball, football, and picnics. Seeking Bi-curious or BiF, 29-35, N/S, stable. Claremont ☎462011

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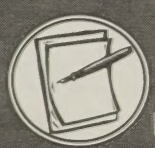

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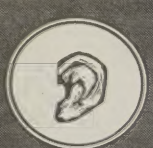

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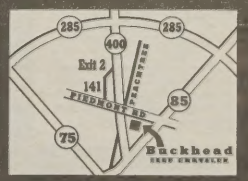
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